commonweal

The Editors
ARMS CONTROL

Jan R. Costello
EXPLOITING GRIEF

$1.50

JUNE 6, 1986

St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

DAVID J. O'BRIEN

THE SUMMONS TO RESPONSIBILITY

Over three decades ago, John Tracy Ellis asked, 'Where are the Catholic intellectuals?' It's still a good question.

ALSO: **Brian Swann** on Wendell Berry •
Margaret R. Miles on Christian asceticism
• **Barbara Harrison** on Kurt Waldheim

...m, feminism
...s replies

ST CHARLES SEM LIB
CARTHAGENA STA
CELINA OH 45822
8612 0079971R

...abortio...
Five pa...

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

Embarrassing mention

Narberth, Pa.

To the Editors: Having received my bachelor's degree from Marquette University in 1951, I must be somewhere near the midpoint of the one million who have benefited from the dedication and expertise of Jesuit teachers in America. That education makes me a bit uncomfortable with Father Schroth's tendency ["Tough Choices on Campus," March 28] to equate Catholic values with "Jesuit presence." Sometimes the latter takes precedence over the former. Even though Father Schroth places the principles of academic freedom, espoused by the American Association of University Professors, high on his list of qualities exemplified by Jesuit institutions of higher education, I continue to be embarrassed at seeing the name of my own alma mater on the AAUP's list of "Censured Administrations" for violation of these principles. The University of Detroit is also on the list. And may I ask Father Schroth, just what is this "Jesuit" priesthood you refer to?

JAMES E. BIECHLER

Widening the gap

Loveland, Ohio

To the Editors: I was disappointed in your editorial "Right to Free Speech" [March 14]. Surely you are disingenuous when you berate the signers of the ad in the *New York Times*, March 2, for not taking up the case of priests and prelates suffering suppression at the hands of various governments. The main point of the *Times* ad is suppression of free speech within the church. We think the church has an important witness to give to the world on issues of justice and peace and love, but that it destroys the credibility of its witness when it treats its own members with such heavy-handed authoritarian repression. There is a disturbing resemblance between the way President Reagan is using the label "Communist" for those who disagree with his political judgments and the way church authorities are using the abortion issue as a test of orthodoxy and even a justification for excommunication.

Your analogies limp badly. The church is neither a for-profit corporation nor an army. I don't think that the president of General Motors instructs his subordinates on how to vote on a particular issue or on which candidate to vote against in an election year, as certain members of the American hierarchy did in 1984. The church is a community of believers, seeking the truth in love, struggling since Vatican II to free itself from hierarchical structures (inherited from the Roman Empire) and to become a People of God, all of whom — pope, bishops, theologians, faithful — share in the teaching function of the church as Charles Curran explains so well in his many books. The teaching office of the bishops can be, and has been, wrong in its judgments, as anyone with even a slight acquaintance with church history can demonstrate — cf. usury, slavery, religious liberty, procreation as *the* primary end of marriage, historical criticism as useful in biblical exegesis, etc. Errors have been corrected, doctrine has been refined and enriched precisely because some voices, particularly among theologians and laity have been raised in dissent. Dissenters have often been treated harshly, silenced in a manner reminiscent of modern totalitarian regimes, but eventually the new insight — whether Galileo's view of the heavenly bodies or John Courtney Murray's ideas on religious liberty — wins acceptance.

You write: "Catholic pluralism in regard to the legality of abortion must be considerably wider than in regard to the morality of it." One purpose of the *Times* ad of October 1984 was precisely to say that Catholics can in good faith dissent from the political judgments of the bishops, a position which you defend eloquently in your editorial ["To Admit Diversity & Endorse Discussion," November 1, 1985] about Governor Cuomo. The more complex and specific the issue to which a moral norm is applied, the less it is possible to claim certitude for one's judgment. Surely prudential judgments about political strategies fall under this maxim. One may agree with the bishops about the moral evil of abortion and still disagree with them about the desirability of a human life amendment.

The ad also raised the moral issue: "that abortion, though tragic, can sometimes be a moral choice." This question is also complex and specific. As I read Charles Curran's guidelines, it too could fall under the maxim that permits dissent. But rather than elaborate on his ecclesiology, let me turn to the experiences that led me to sign the ad. I observe that the gap between official teaching and the practice of many believing Catholics is widening, as the gap between official teachings and the thinking of Catholics has already widened on a variety of controversial issues, e.g. contraception, pre-marital sex, divorce and remarriage, ordination of women. I teach on a Catholic campus. Our young people indulge in pre-marital sex about as much as other young people; they use contraceptives; many of them are involved fairly deeply with alcohol and/or drugs. In some classes, 25 percent of the young women answer yes to the question: have you ever had an abortion? Would not candid and respectful discussion be more helpful than rigid authoritarian pronouncements?

The way that both the moral and the legal issues are being used by a variety of church authorities from the Vatican to local bishops to college administrators is definitely having a chilling effect. Some of my colleagues are afraid to say what they think about the issue; others have been actively discouraged from dealing

(Continued on page 349)

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1986 Commonweal Foundation.

Illustrations: Cover & pp. 332, 336, 339, Paul Valerry; p. 327, Duncan, England; p. 328, Punch; p. 330, Emil Antonucci; p. 331, Bas., *Tachydromos;* p. 338, J.G. Szabo, Rothco.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

Volume CXIII, Number 11

Correspondence	322
Editorials	323
Selected memories: *Barbara Harrison*	326
Exploiting grief: *Jan R. Costello*	327
As the synod nears: *Abigail McCarthy*	329
Second thoughts on Libya: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*	330
The summons to responsibility: *David J. O'Brien*	332
Lost innovation: *Debra Campbell*	334
Abortion, pluralism, feminism:	338
Verse: *B.A. St. Andrews*	337
Regina de Cormier-Shekerjian, Elisabeth Murawski, Larry Weirather	347
Screen: *Tom O'Brien*	343
Stage: *Gerald Weales*	344

Books

The Wild Birds/Collected Poems 1957-1982/Standing by Words/Recollected Essays 1965-1980: *Brian Swann*	345
Christian Spirituality: *Margaret R. Miles*	346
The Courage of Conviction: *Karen Sue Smith*	349

Staff

Editor: Peter Steinfels
Assistant Editors: David Toolan, Karen Sue Smith, Patrick Jordan
Production Editor: Anne Robertson
Poetry: Rosemary Deen
Movies: Tom O'Brien
Staff: Karen F. Silva, Harriette Balsky, Patricia Mazzola
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas-New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Telephone: (212) MU 3-2042. Single copy, $1.50. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $28; Canada, $30; foreign, $33. Special two-year rate: U.S., $49; Canada, $53; foreign, $59. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

commonweal

RETHINKING ARMS CONTROL

THE WRY observation about progress — that sometimes it's just a mule backing into a barn — most certainly wasn't made with arms control in mind. It might as well have been. Still, the present arms control stalemate, all five years of it, may yet solidify the one fragile consensus to emerge from within the U.S. arms control community. It is a consensus about the need for basic direction, namely: that the only way out of the impasse is to rethink our goals and objectives.

Henry Kissinger intimated as much in the 1984 pronouncement that arms control theory "is now at a dead end"; so did Strobe Talbot in his reflection, on the INF and START talks, that the U.S. "no longer knew what it wanted . . . much less how to get it." Even while urging for effective arms control, Leslie H. Gelb, formerly of the State Department and closely identified with the SALT II proposals, had to admit: "Arms control has essentially failed." And if there is any doubt about the need for clear theoretical groundwork, the latest round of negotiations in Geneva stands as proof of the crisis in imagination.

The U.S. has not only returned to the 1981 issue of intermediate-range missiles as the area for greatest progress in the current arms talks. In doing so, it has virtually repeated its earlier proposal. That proposal had required the Soviets to eliminate all of their intermediate-range missiles from both Europe and Asia or else the U.S. would deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. When the Soviets predictably refused, the U.S. went ahead with the deployment. Now, after five years of "getting tough with the Russians," after claims that steadily increased military expenditures have boosted the U.S. to the "position of strength" it needs to negotiate with the Soviets, the new proposal is a rerun. It differs only in that the very missiles it deployed in Europe are now part of its elimination scheme. So much for the mule backing. . . .

Of course, for real progress to occur, assessing the failures of arms control is not enough. Nor are recycled or cosmetically changed policies. The theoretical underpinnings of arms control must be rethought and then tested at the bargaining table. That is why the current discussion among arms control experts could provide the needed impetus to break the deadlock.

Writing in *Foreign Affairs* (Winter, 1985/86), a pioneer of arms-control theory, Thomas C. Schelling, re-enters the debate to show what went wrong. He concludes that, except for the self-restraint exercised by adhering to the SALT II proposals, the U.S. has not had "any coherent theory of what arms control is supposed to accomplish" since 1972. Furthermore, since that time the U.S. has committed a crucial error by shifting its interest in arms control "from the *character* of weapons to their *number*." While the increase in the number of warheads that accompanied MIRVing understandably contributed to the preoccupation with limiting numbers of weapons, Schelling contends that neglecting to ask the crucial question — what is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the character of a weapon; is it destabilizing or not? — is what derailed arms control. To get back on the proper track, then, the superpowers must consider how each side can limit its own vulnerability without increasing the other side's. In other words, the entire discussion rests upon the the belief that, in the nuclear age, vulnerability is an inescapable fact of life. The best deterrence, therefore, is that which affords "reciprocal vulnerability."

Schelling is not the only critic to point out how limiting weapons by number, or, as the SALT II treaty did, by number within a fixed category of land, sea, or air, has had the effect — whether unwittingly or planned — of making arms negotiations a driving agent of the arms race. When, for example, the MX as a "bargaining chip" failed to spur negotiations with the Soviets, the U.S. felt obliged to deploy the weapon as threatened, adding to its arsenal a destabilizing weapon, that is one both capable of and susceptible to a preemptive first strike. At that point even the Scowcroft Commission neglected to consider the nontargetable, undersea Trident submarine as an alternative. All in the name of arms control.

Other conclusions that can be drawn from Schelling:

● It is a mistake to limit arms control to what can be accomplished by formal treaties. Arms control can be achieved by reciprocal restraint — a point that the current administration has made as well, although a leading example, both sides' grudging adherence to SALT II, does vest on a negotiated treaty. More important, arms control should be integral to all national defense planning.

● The notion of "bargaining chips" and the argument that "*perceived* inadequacies" must be repaired — whether or not they are inadequacies in fact — are both dubious approaches to arms control strategies that Schelling calls attempts "to make things better by first making them worse." Bargaining chips turn out to be new, and unwanted, benchmarks in the arms race and obstacles to arms control. A heavy emphasis on the need to counter decisively any Soviet misperception of U.S. arms weakness or even of a "perceived lack of competitive determination" leads into a house of mirrors — perceptions of perceptions — and, warns Schelling, "could be self-fulfilling."

● The president's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) does not fit well the goals of arms control primarily because it envisions a unilateral ability of the U.S. to ward off a Soviet nuclear attack; genuine deterrence is mutual not unilateral restraint. A scaled-down SDI, of course, could be fit into the original spirit of the ABM treaty, which would have allowed systems meant simply to defend land-based weapons rather than cities. "This is a line taken by many defenders of SDI," notes Schelling, "although it is not clear to me whether it is an opportunistic rescue of ground-based missiles under the SDI umbrella, a minimally defensible foot in the door for SDI, a filip to advanced research, or merely an attempt to rescue the president's image by showing that the concept of SDI, though overblown and oversold, is not quite empty."

Schelling's overall argument is not immune to challenge, and he does not take up with specificity many current questions. Yet it is helpful to see how ideas might be applied. Take anti-satellite weapons (ASATs). The U.S. position currently is that because the Soviets possess such a weapon, the U.S. lacks parity in this category — regardless of the widely known characterization of the slow and primitive Soviet weapon in contrast to the not-finally-tested but purportedly faster and more accurate U.S. design. Why, in the name of arms control, must the U.S. match the Soviet anti-satellite weapon tit for tat? While the U.S. might argue against restricting ASATs on the basis of other reasons, parity or the numbers game should not be the basis of such a decision by Schelling's reasoning.

On the other hand, not every issue falls equally under Schelling's critique. The question of nuclear testing, for example. It has been argued, though Schelling himself does not argue this, that in the past testing has resulted in the creation of more accurate, lower megatonnage weapons, and hence, has increased stability. But there are other arguments to be made to support negotiations for a comprehensive test ban treaty. Isn't stability better served in this instance by looking

SAVE THE TIGER

OF PREDATORS & PREY

"I'M Herman Badger and I know you're out there." The local public television channel was conducting its latest fund drive, and I was wondering why Badger kept referring to me as "out there" as though I were a cold front; where I was, was "in here." But back to Herman Badger:

"You're out there, you freeloaders, enjoying quality programming — *without paying your fair share*. I don't know how you can look at yourself in the mirror!"

The drama was unbearable. How long would Badger berate us before some guilt-ridden soul in Cummington called in a pledge? "Oh God, I can't live without Julia Child — please take my money." He's right. Julia Child has her head in the right place. Once she dropped a soufflé on the floor, scooped it back into the bowl, and commented: "One thing to remember about cooking is that in the kitchen you're usually alone."

The public television fund-raisers could use a bit of Julia Child's impishness. When Herman Badger wasn't doing his tough-cop routine, Marianne Mousetrap was being supportive.

"Who are we? We're people like *you*, people who care about our communities and families." Here I braced myself, as Marianne appeared to be the sort of person to use *caring* as an adjective, usually to describe oneself. "We're all caring people who want to make sure that this station can afford caring programs — shows for the whole family like *Sesame Street* and *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood* and tonight's *National Geographic Special*."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not only at the character of individual weapons, but at the larger context? Why should the U.S. wait for new technological breakthroughs to save us from the arms race rather than seizing the moment when the Soviets are ready and willing to enter a test ban? The route of salvation by technology is uncertain, risky, and expensive — and the more complicated the weapons system, the greater number of tests required. Isn't stability better served by breaking the cycle of testing and deployment while negotiating? A comprehensive test ban, even one mutually agreed upon without a formal treaty if need be, could provide enough respite so that the question of redirection could be adequately considered. And it would provide the pound of flesh needed to convince the waiting world that arms control is an effort in good faith.

For the refocusing of the arms control discussion — so potentially helpful — is only valid if it is linked to real commitment and is not being used as an evasion: to dismiss current arms control efforts without substituting anything else in their place. "An administration with no genuine interest in arms limitation finds in arms control the best pulpit from which to preach arms competition," Schelling says without naming names.

In fact, is arms control currently being used as a pulpit to espouse the gospel of the arms race? Or at least a pulpit from which the administration preaches restraint while its true faith is placed in the powers of U.S. weapons tecnhology? There is certainly evidence to suggest that such is the case: first, the initial reluctance of this administration to take up the cause of arms control, because of Mr. Reagan's distaste for past agreements, as evidenced in his description of the SALT II proposal as "fatally flawed"; second, the fact that each major effort to negotiate has followed upon outside pressures as diverse as congressional opposition to the MX missile, the now quiet nuclear freeze campaign, the Catholic bishops' letter on peace, and the 1984 campaign issue of a summit with the Soviets. What these pressures have in common is political power. And today, just as in 1981 when the "zero option" plan for limiting intermediate-range missiles (cited above) was

---

Being a caring parent, I was watching that *National Geographic Special* with my two-year-old daughter. "Oh, Kaitlin, look!" I enthused. "Tigers! A real tiger, look!" We watched the real tiger move stealthily, fluidly through the jungle, and crouch near a watering hole.

"What's he doing, Daddy?"

"He's resting, sweetheart. It's hot." Suddenly the tiger sprang and raced into the water, whence dozens of antelope fled in panic. One baby antelope was quickly caught and devoured.

"What's he doing now, Daddy?"

"He's playing with the antelope, sweetheart. Nice tiger. Like Tigger and Roo."

Besides making us feel guilty and telling us that they care, public TV fund-raisers conduct ingenious conversations to keep us tuned: whether or not they had heard from North Adams; how many left-handed people had responded that evening; how long they were willing to wait for another twenty bucks. . . .

It became clear that some consultant had put them onto a new target group. "We know you're out there digging flicks like *The King of Hearts* and *Woodstock*. So send us a message about the kind of sophisticated programming you like by writing out that check tonight." *King of Hearts* is about a bunch of escaped lunatics who show us how beautiful it is to be schizophrenic. In *Woodstock* everybody takes green acid tabs, gets naked, and applauds wildly when John Sebastian tells them what he thinks of them. "You are really, really beautiful. Just incredibly beautiful people." It occurred to me that Marianne Mousetrap sounded like John Sebastian, and Herman Badger resembled the tiger.

I watched this fund drive faithfully because I am a guilty, caring person who wanted to see Jimi Hendrix in *Woodstock*. As somebody in the public television target group — born after Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* and before Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" — I know something about this market. Few are as dutiful as I. Very few, in this era of remote-control tuners, will watch quality fund-raising for two shakes of a lamb's tail. Or even for one last shake of the little antelope's tail.

You see, the people who grooved on *Woodstock* now enjoy advertisements. It's been a long time since anyone preferred an Ann Beattie story to a Ralph Lauren ad in *The New Yorker*. And why should we? Her stories are all about people watching TV commercials. Doesn't more talent go into an ad than into all the sitcoms and cop shows combined? The ads on MTV are so stylish you can't tell where the video leaves off and the sales pitch begins. ". . . ba doop ba doop ba doo . . . hanging out in your 501 jeans . . . ." To catch the Lite Beer commercials, the guys I watch basketball with will even stop listening to me. Over and over, Bob Uecker keeps on calling the front office and bingo!

So I have a tip for public television. Keep Herman Badger and Marianne Mousetrap off camera. If you can't run a business the American way, by selling ads, then your quarterly fund-raising drives should feature the best of network commercials. Don't let anybody well-meaning or high-minded comment on these ads. Just give us the old ads we all love, like Alka-Seltzer's marshmallowed meatballs. Believe me, it would really get those phones jingling off the hook.

I won't even take a fee for this quality consultation. I consider my proposal a public service. And I'll deduct it.

ROBERT H. BELL

(Robert H. Bell teaches English at Williams College, and airs his humor on National Public Radio.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

first proposed, critics question whether the revived maneuver is a ploy. Make the Soviets an offer they will inevitably reject, to give the appearance of working toward arms control, in order to achieve a calculated, self-interested objective.

The irony is that President Reagan is in a position better to achieve arms control than any other recent president. He could bargain for deep cuts in both U.S. and Soviet arsenals; he could limit anti-satellite weapons, chemical weapons, and nuclear tests. He has the advantage in regard to arms control that Richard Nixon had in regard to America's "opening" to China, the ability to overcome the diehard opposition of the American right and present arms control as a measure in the self-interest of both superpowers. The likelihood that Mr. Reagan might actually pursue this course is, alas, slim. It would take not only a change of heart on his part but a change of personnel in his administration.

So rethinking arms control probably won't pay off tomorrow. It remains nonetheless the foundation for true progress, a progress G.K. Chesterton once defined not as "looking for a direction in which one can go on indefinitely" but as "looking for a place where we can stop."

OUT OF REACH

Writing in the March-April issue of *The Catholic Worker*, Bill Griffin, a nurse associated with the New York Catholic Worker house, tells of the life, death, and times of Gary Leib. Griffin had known the thirty-eight-year-old Leib over the past twelve years. He recounts Leib's story with that respect and attention characteristic of *The Catholic Worker*. It is a story that should be read as parable as much as obituary.

Like many people who come through the doors of such refuges, Gary Leib had a painful history, one which, except for fortune, might be the lot of us all. By the time Leib first came to the Catholic Worker, a young man of the Vietnam era, he was already a chronic alcoholic. There were respites; and his family showed him care. But over the years, his life on Manhattan's streets — the hit-and-miss shelter, the make-do clothes and meals, the acid of the vine — took their toll. There followed lacerations, broken limbs, and eventually grand mal seizures.

Griffin tells of walking into the neurology-neurosurgery floor of Bellevue Hospital in early 1985, where he was a member of the nursing staff, and finding Leib in the middle of a seizure. (Bellevue has suffered from many stereotypes, but if you were to ask a Manhattan ambulance driver where she or he would like to be taken, the answer would probably be Bellevue.) The hospital spared nothing in its treatment. As Griffin writes, "Blood cultures, X-rays, CAT scans, spinal taps, indeed the whole wondrous array of modern diagnostic tools was called into service." After four weeks, Leib was stabilized. He was once again coherent, and with medication, seizure-free. He left the hospital with a bottle of Dilantin capsules, a doctor's appointment, a referral to the Municipal Men's Shelter, and a subway token.

Griffin saw Leib several days later at the Catholic Worker soup line. Gary had left the Municipal Shelter — commonly referred to by men in Leib's situation as a zoo — and was back on the street. He was drinking and on the downhill.

Several months afterward, Gary was again admitted to Bellevue. Griffin notes this time things were more serious. A craniotomy had to be performed to drain fluid that had built up because of head trauma from seizures. The use of intravenous antibiotics was required around the clock over a series of touch-and-go weeks.

Again Gary Leib was released, again to the Municipal Shelter. Again, within several months, he was back in the neurology ward at Bellevue. Yet again he was released, yet again to the "Muni." Gary's assigned social worker told Griffin that Gary was really discharged "to the street, because I know he won't stay there [the Muni]." And she added sadly, "There are just no long-term residential care facilities for people like Gary."

Griffin points out that Gary Leib both received and deserved the best medical care available — every exacting procedure, every human effort, every penny spent. Yet, Griffin writes, "the true goal of all this expense and hard work, Gary's recovery and health, was put out of reach for want of proper housing and continued medical support."

Something is terribly amiss. Our capacities for hi-tech treatment are prodigious; our capacities for simple care seem tattered and impoverished.

Gary's final return to Bellevue was in February 1986. Following a seizure and a trip to the hospital's emergency room, he wandered out of the hospital itself and fell into a nearby excavation site. Perhaps it was the result of another seizure. But there he was found frozen to death the following morning.

The Waldheim affair

SELECTED MEMORIES

WHAT TIME REFUSES TO FORGET

BY A HAIR'S breadth, Kurt Waldheim lost the majority of votes needed to win Austria's presidency and faces a June 8 runoff against Socialist candidate Kurt Steyrer. Whatever the outcome of the election, which is virtually assured at this point, allegations that Waldheim was a Nazi war criminal have prompted myriad questions and revealed staggering ironies and complexities.

This is only the beginning of a journey of conscience that will catapult the Austrian people into the realm of self-examination, for Kurt Waldheim reminds them of a past most would choose to forget. But it is not only the Austrian people who must make this arduous journey; all people concerned about human dignity and human promise must confront the questions raised in the Waldheim affair.

Within war there are codes of conduct and acceptable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

parameters of behavior. How far did Waldheim side-step these parameters? How accountable is he for atrocities committed against Jews and non-Jews in Greece and Yugoslavia? Why, if, in his words, he was simply a decent man doing his duty as a decent soldier, has he so vehemently denied the Balkan phase of his military service? If, in 1948, the seventeen-member United Nations War Crimes Commission gave him an "A" listing, meaning he should be tried as a war criminal, why was he not extradited by the Yugoslavs along with his commanding officer, General Alexander Loehr, who was tried for war crimes and executed in 1947 as a war criminal? How is it that the issues raised today were not raised in 1971 when Waldheim was seeking the United Nations position? Would he have been elected Secretary-General if the information now available had been known?

After repeated denials, in an interview with the Belgrade daily newspaper *Vercernje Novosti*, Waldheim finally admitted that in 1942 he was in the Kozara Mountains during the Kozara Operation, a brutal massacre in which the Germans killed thousands of civilians or sent them to concentration camps. To questions about earlier disclaimers that he had taken part in Yugoslav military maneuvers, Waldheim is quoted as saying, "Who can remember everything from the war period?"

In response to the accusation that he was in Greece during the year that thousands of Greek Jews were deported to Auschwitz, and thousands of non-Jewish resistance fighters suffered mercilessly, Waldheim has said he was merely serving as an interpreter: "I never had anything to do with such cruelties. I was in the hills doing my work, rarely going to Salonika, so I never knew." It is impossible for him not to have known. Leon Benmayor, leader of Salonika's small group of Holocaust survivors, says: "How can Waldheim say that he came to a city where maybe one-quarter of the population wore the yellow star and didn't notice they all disappeared? It would have been better for him to say, 'Yes, I was there, I know, but I could do nothing.' "

Waldheim has acknowledged, after many repudiations, that he was enrolled in a Nazi youth group. As a member of a Nazi student union in 1938, while studying at the Vienna Consular Academy, and as a member of the Brownshirts, the paramilitary organization also known as the S.A., he would have been subjected to unrelenting propaganda and indoctrination. He would have sung the Nazi anthem with its horrific lines, "When Jewish blood spurts from the knife/Then things will go twice as well." And he would have been well-acquainted with Adolf Hitler's mandate: "Youth must be indifferent to pain. There must be no weakness or tenderness in it. I want to see once more in its eyes the gleam of pride and independence of the beast of prey."

The most charitable image rising from the cauldron of growing speculation about Waldheim is of a just man picked up by the scruff of his neck and thrown into an unwanted war. The most pitiable specter is a human being acting under orders, with little feeling or thought, ignorant of the issues in which he is involved, and totally oblivious to any call to the ethical, an Orwellian character who has "no dignity of emotion, or deep or complex sorrows."

As human beings, to a certain degree, we are all imitative creatures. We are all vulnerable to the social mythologies of our times. Yet we must ask of our leaders no less than we would ask of ourselves. We have the capacity to be plummeted to the depths and to be no more than ignoble spirits in an ignoble world, but we also have the capacity for heroism.

In May 1941, shortly after the Nazis entered Athens and raised the swastika on the Acropolis, two young students, no older than Kurt Waldheim when Austria was forcibly annexed by Germany, climbed the steep hill leading to the Parthenon in the deep of night and tore down the swastika in a courageous and memorable act of resistance. We would all want to have the capacity to perform such acts of heroism. Certainly we should expect it of our leaders. BARBARA HARRISON

(Barbara Harrison is founding director of the Center for the Study of Children's Literature at Simmons College in Boston.)

Ethics & the media

EXPLOITING GRIEF

RESTRAINT & THE RIGHT TO KNOW

THE TELEVISION coverage of the crash of a Delta jet in Dallas incensed one viewer, prompting him to complain through a newspaper's "letters to the editor": "Where is your conscience and compassion?" "I'm appalled at how intrusive, insensitive, and downright arrogant many of the reporters are. This needs to change now."

The letter-writer had witnessed modern journalism's standard fare — callous interviews with relatives of crash victims, photographs of suffering and grief, and maudlin detail of each victim's life story. He wondered, as many people do, whether the media have any scruples left.

As a television reporter for eight and a half years, I can tell you that the answer is no. Common decency is given the short end of the stick in a world where deadlines and sensationalism come first.

I have brandished the microphone and asked, "How does it feel?" I've called up grieving friends and relatives searching for that gripping anecdote, preferably on camera, that will

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bring the story home. I understand what motivates such questions. Yet I believe — unlike many of my colleagues — that the practice can and should be stopped.

Why do reporters point the cameras at grieving families, heartbroken widows, and suffering accident victims? Why do photojournalists and television news reporters go to such lengths to capitalize on an unfortunate person's tragic and gory death? Because that is the quick and dirty way to convey emotion, and emotion sells news. People expect to see human drama and misery unfold in their living rooms. Tears, anguish, and pain are what make photographs and television stories powerful.

I'm no saint, but I have tried to be discreet in my attempts to capture the human drama on videotapes. When relatives of victims lost in the Delta plane crash gathered in Atlanta's Hartsfield Airport on their way to identify remains, I tried to hold our station's photographer back. He wanted to get close-up shots just as the other photographers were doing. One more photographer would not make much of a difference to the besieged travelers, but I did not want to add to their pain.

The photographer believed he was losing the competitive edge. He knew the news director wanted emotion-packed pictures and interviews. He placed his job above the grieving relatives' privacy. I was only partially successful in holding him back; I kept my distance and did not do any interviews.

Such a tactic won no kudos from the boss, but it beat outright mutiny. Then I argued for an hour with a news director who wanted me to "personalize" a story on the murder of an elderly woman. He said I should go door to door until I found a few residents who would stand in front of a camera and answer such questions as, "Did you know the victim well?" "What is your reaction to her death?" "Are you taking special precautions?" I felt such an angle exploited the fears and pains of the residents, but the news director insisted I bring back an interview.

I had to find a way around such demands. It occurred to me to try and find a neighborhood watch spokesman or public safety committee chairman. That way at least, there would be a legitimate reason to ask such questions. It wouldn't be pure exploitation. Fortunately, I had the time and good luck to find one such person.

But sometimes, I have had to stand my ground. Once, I was asked to interview a family whose teenage son had committed suicide. It was the second teen suicide in the area that day, and for some reason, the news director decided to lead the newscast with the "teen suicide epidemic." I flatly refused to bother the family by telephone or in person. The producer said I should at least get a shot of their house and interview their neighbors. I wouldn't do it. I couldn't talk them out of the story, but we finally agreed on a new angle: we interviewed a psychiatrist who worked with depressed teens and who offered tips on detecting suicidal tendencies.

There are no ironclad rules or laws by which to decide ethical issues. Even the codes of ethics appear contradictory. For example, while the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, urges the news media to respect the right to privacy and not to pander to morbid curiosity about sex, crime, and vice, the code also says the overriding mission is to satisfy "the public's right to know of events of public importance and interest." Yet the public's interest in gossip, grotesque events, and human misery is precisely the problem.

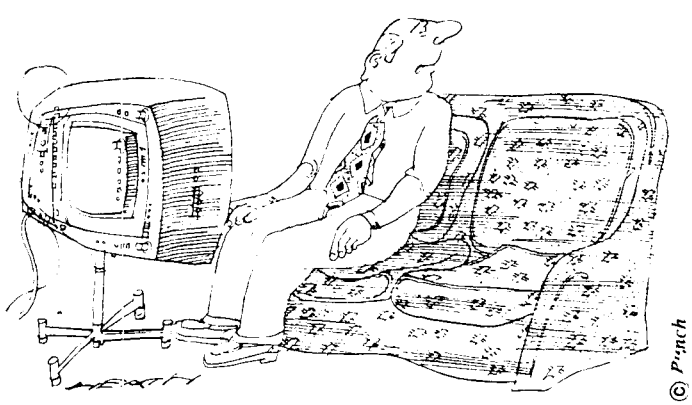
Sigma Delta Chi has no enforcement power and does little to discourage sensational reporting. In fact, professional organizations have a tendency to encourage such conduct by awarding prizes to the offenders. *News Photographer*, the official publication of the National Press Photographers Association, is a case in point. In September 1985, all three of the top winning photographs exhibited a lack of respect for individual privacy.

The top prize was awarded for a series of photographs of a desperate teenager threatening to jump off a bridge onto an interstate highway. The second place winner shows firemen carrying a charred — yet identifiable — body from a burning apartment complex. The focus of the third place winner is a hysterical woman who is watching paramedics try to resuscitate her five-year-old niece who lost consciousness in a burning house. Are these award-winning pictures worth the pain they may cause?

Perhaps news reporters must put the shoe on the other foot in order to answer the question. Mark Bauer, an Atlanta television news producer and formerly a newspaper and television reporter, often found himself in the position of turning other peoples' misfortunes into news. At times, he says, he felt like a vulture. But Bauer believes that in order to remain competitive and employed, he has to capitalize on grief.

One day, the tables turned. Bauer was producing a news program when the Delta jet crashed in Dallas. He asked reporters to get reactions from Delta employees at the Atlanta airport. He had forgotten that his wife, a Delta stewardess, was returning to the airport that night. When one reporter tried to put her on camera, Bauer told him to leave her alone.

"It was a strange situation to suddenly find myself telling someone in the media, 'Don't bother my family,' " Bauer said. "But, I felt that it was a personal matter. They were all sharing that moment of grief. It's not something you need to share with the media and with the general public."



"Hurry dear—I think standards of taste are being broken down."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Experiences like Bauer's are few and far between. In most cases, news people deal with strangers whose feelings are more easily ignored than those of a loved one would be.

Gradually, an area of law is developing that offers legal remedy to victims of thoughtless, tasteless, or insensitive reporting. People are suing for "intentional infliction of emotional distress." Among the plaintiffs: a woman who thought a newspaper should not have published a picture of her clad only in a towel as she rushed from an apartment where she had been held hostage; a rape victim who thought a television news station should not have identified her; and parents who were photographed upon discovering their children had suffocated in a refrigerator.

The cases, however, are difficult to win. Since 1978, there have been at least thirty-four cases accusing the media of intentionally or recklessly causing severe emotional distress, and defendants won three-fourths of them before they even got to trial. But plaintiffs won four out of five of the cases that were heard by juries, and damages ranged from $10,000 to $40,000.

The verdicts indicate that jurors are on the side of the alleged media victims. Perhaps they wouldn't be so ready to condemn and punish if the media policed itself.

Noble attempts have been made. In 1947 the Commission on Freedom of the Press concluded that reporters "should undoubtedly have more respect than many of them do now for the desire of private persons to be let alone." It recommended setting up an unofficial review board. This suggestion so outraged reporters, it never left the drawing board.

What the profession needs is a tough and enforceable code of ethics. Violators should be taken before a professional review board made up of experienced reporters, photographers, and news editors, as well as leaders in the community. The board should have the power to publicly reprimand journalists who violate the code of ethics, suspend their membership in the organization, or expel repeat offenders from professional societies altogether.

The only recourse against offensive journalistic behavior need not be the courts. The media can open other channels of redress by inviting public criticism and participating in peer review. Viewers should be told how to take their complaints before the professional review board, and those with a legitimate grievance, or their representatives, should be allowed to respond during prime-time news programs.

Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis argued that the Constitution gives Americans "the right to be let alone — the most comprehensive of rights and the right most valued by civilized man." Freedom of the press does not give the press freedom to disregard the rights of everyone else.

The media have special privileges based on the need for public enlightenment and extended by public trust. Journalists should uphold that trust by respecting the right to privacy as carefully as they defend the right to know.

JAN R. COSTELLO

(Jan R. Costello is currently working in public relations for Hands Across America. She was a television journalist for many years until she brought up the issue of ethics in media once too often.)

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

AS THE SYNOD NEARS — I

THE LAITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CHURCH

WHAT IS the role of the laity in the church and the world? The next bishops' synod, scheduled to take place in Fall, 1987, will address the question. Plans for preliminary consultations are now in progress — somewhat belatedly given the scope and complexity of the subject. These consultations themselves have a variety of sponsors. First among them of course, are those sponsored by the Bishops' Committee on the Laity and its secretariat. Then there are those sponsored by groups of clergy and laity loosely affiliated with religious orders and institutions. And finally, at least one national consultation has been planned by independent lay persons.

Perhaps nothing in American Catholic history has been more astonishing than the extent to which lay persons have taken responsibility for the works of the church in the last twenty years. Enrolling and welcoming new parishioners, evangelizing, organizing prayer and study groups, visiting the sick, comforting the grieving, aiding the poor, instructing children and adults, furthering ecumenical relations, planning liturgies; all these are, in a truly living parish, the tasks of parish lay workers. Lay persons are lectors and eucharistic ministers. Formal Catholic education, especially at the elementary level, is largely in the hands of lay teachers. Lay persons are effective members, and no longer tokens, on institutional and diocesan boards. The church in America has, in short, become dependent on the laity for its continuity and vitality as a community of believers. We have come a long way from the days in which the Catholic laity were expected only to "pray, pay, and obey." Or so it seems.

Three things, at least, have played parts in this change. The most fundamental is that there has been growth in the Catholic consciousness that the church is constituted, as Vatican II put it, as the People of God.

A second factor is that the decline in priestly and religious vocations, the numbers of priests and religious leaving their original calling altogether or seeking new works, and the aging of those remaining, meant that some ministries had to be opened to lay persons or abandoned (again, especially true in the field of education). Lay people, better in-

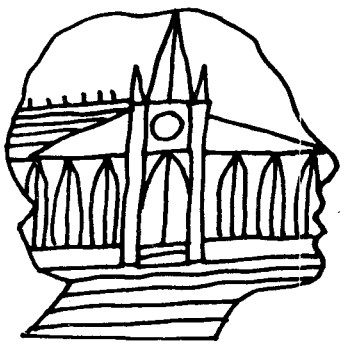
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

structed and more leisured than ever before, and more aware of the mission of the church than they had ever been, were happy to fill what gaps they could.

A third factor — and one we tend to overlook — has been pointed out by Sister Joan Bland, SND, who founded and directs the courses for adults known as EPS, Education for Parish Service. She reminds us that at the same time that ministries began to be open to the laity, there was a sudden multiplication of the services and ministries undertaken by and offered by parishes. Many of what might be called the social ministries — long the very stuff of Protestant church life — have become part of Catholic church life as well. There are, quite simply, many more tasks for volunteers to undertake *in the church* as the church has opened to the world.

These developments might seem to be, in themselves, an answer to the first part of the question posed by the forthcoming synod — what is the role of the laity in the church? The laity are, in fact, performing a variety of ministries and services — these must then, in part, indicate what the role of the laity is, must they not? No, not necessarily. In the forthcoming consultations there will be a temptation to concentrate on the theory of lay spirituality and mission and, perhaps, to ignore one hard fact: the lay ministries in which so many have joyfully engaged and found fulfillment exist only at the whim of the local pastor or bishop. (Lay missioners, in another new form of ministry not mentioned above, also serve at the pleasure of religious orders or missionary bishops and priests.) New pastors have been known to wipe out existing parish councils, dismiss eucharistic ministers, and close thriving schools — all without consultation with the laity affected. Ordinaries, on taking over a diocese, have been known to sever diocesan connections with devoted lay groups and movements, thereby effectively eliminating them or leaving them floundering. Any discussion of the role of the laity in the church must confirm the laity's right to the role and must seek ways of altering the lines of authority so as to accommodate it.

We Catholics in the United States,



clergy and laity alike, have long taken a highly centralized and authoritarian form of church governance for granted. Few of us are aware that, in the early nineteenth century in this country, laymen participated in church government in matters extending from the formation of parishes to the management of church finances and personnel. In his ground-breaking, recently published *The American Catholic Experience* (Doubleday, $19.95, 504 pp.), Jay P. Dolan tells us that throughout that century, "Two concepts of local church government were at odds: a congregational model in which there was an emphasis on a democratic exercise of authority, and a hierarchical model, which meant clerical supremacy in church affairs." By the end of the century, he adds, "The Irish tradition of an authoritarian clergy and a deferential laity had become the normative model in the United States."

Since Vatican II there has been a departure from that normative model in the thought and personal practices of the laity, if not in church structures themselves. The recent survey entitled *Study of Future Church Leadership* conducted by Catholic University sociologist Dean R. Hoge finds a majority of lay adults urging the encouragement and preparation of lay persons to take over many tasks of parish governance. Their "main message," according to the report, is that apart from marriages, baptisms, and the Mass, most of the work now being done by parish priests could be reassigned to deacons or lay persons. Not surprisingly, the majority of priests surveyed objected to the possibility of confining themselves to sacramental and liturgical duties.

Any discussion of the role of the laity in the church must deal with these differences of opinion and the gap they indicate between the majorities of both clergy and laity. The survey also revealed an even larger gap between clergy and lay opinion on the role of the laity in the world. But that is a subject for another column. ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Of several minds: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*

SECOND THOUGHTS ON LIBYA

THE 'MAD-DOG' DISEASE IS CATCHING

IT IS NOW nearly two months since my president (the only president we have, as somebody once reminded us), Mr. Ronald "Rambo" Reagan took Col. Muammar "Mad Dog" Qaddafi out in the alley and gave him a bloody nose; i.e., the president ordered American planes to bomb several targets in Libya, including Qaddafi's residence.

If I remember correctly, in my younger and more sentimental days I held two prejudices that would have caused me to disapprove of the American attack on Libya: (1) In international altercations the presumption of rightness belongs with the underdog; and even if the underdog isn't always right, the top-dog ought to be sporting enough to overlook a multitude of annoyances; after all, boys will be boys. (2) In international affairs the golden rule applies: no nation, not even a very large and powerful one, has the right to do to another nation, not even a small and weak one, what it wouldn't want the other nation to do to it.

Now that I'm older and wiser, I've renounced these juvenile prejudices. Underdogs, I've discovered, are often

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enough very nasty people. And even if topdogs have a *noblesse oblige* duty of forbearance in the face of provocation, such forbearance ought to have its limits. The great and settled nations of the world have another duty as well, namely, to give lessons in proper international conduct to the young and rambunctious nations. If I may shift from a canine to a feline metaphor, Libya twisted the American lion's tail once too often. Since Col. Qaddafi didn't seem to understand, President Reagan drew him a picture; he drew it with planes and bombs.

Nor can the golden rule be admitted in relations between great powers and small. Great powers have great interests; and in pursuit of those interests, provided they are legitimate, great powers are sometimes allowed to do things that small powers are not entitled to do. Jefferson may have been right that all men are created equal. But all nations are not.

The Reagan attack on Libya was directed not against terrorism in general but against state-sponsored terrorism. Private terrorism is a dreadful thing; but its evil pales in comparison with the state-sponsored variety. Between private terrorism and state-sponsored terrorism there exists the difference that holds between private crimes of violence and the same crimes committed by public authorities. Private crimes of violence, while extremely unfortunate, are compatible with a free society; violence in the name of public authority renders what might otherwise have been a free society into an essentially unfree one. Similarly, private terrorism makes the world a dangerous place; public terrorism unleashes the nightmarish "mere anarchy" that Yeats warned us of.

When I first put all the above considerations together, I found myself inclined to join the general American celebration that greeted the bombing of Libya. It's not that I, any more than the average cheering American, expected the attack to function as an effective cease-and-desist order to the terrorists of the world. Just the opposite. At least for the foreseeable future, the American bombing of Libya is likely to increase the frequency of terrorism. But we've thrown the gauntlet down. We've said there are some things we just don't intend to put up with. We've made it clear we are not to be mistaken for pussycats or paper tigers.

But my initial inclination failed to hold. My impulse to cheer the president fizzled out. Let me explain.

First, was it our intention to teach the world that state-sponsored terrorism is intolerable? Or are we only saying that it is intolerable when sponsored by weak and relatively friendless nations like Libya? What about Syria, whom we don't feel free to attack because of its friendship with the Soviet Union? What about Iran, whom we can't attack because of its physical proximity to the USSR and because it is governed by some honest-to-goodness mad dogs, and God knows where they'll start biting if once provoked?

And what about the Soviet Union itself? When, a few years ago, a plausible case was developed linking the KGB with the attempt on the life of Pope John Paul II, the U.S. government immediately and emphatically rejected the theory. And how could it not? To accuse the Soviets of trying to kill the pope would put a great strain on Soviet-American relationships. The Soviets would be obliged to be terribly indignant at such an accusation and to insist on an American apology before normal relations could be resumed. And American public opinion would be little inclined to let our government deal with an enemy government which had not only attempted the great crime of murdering the pope but had compounded it by lying about it in the most bare-faced manner.

Second, the bombing in Tripoli plainly involved an attempt to assassinate Qaddafi. I realize the administration in Washington denies this. But if you're ready to accept that denial at face value, then maybe you'd be interested in this bridge I happen to have for sale? Or how about this marshy land in Florida? If they didn't mean to assassinate Qaddafi, why were they bombing his house? How did they happen to kill his adopted daughter and send two of his sons to the hospital?

There is a popular theory of homicide which holds that killing persons on an individual or face-to-face basis (as, for instance, at My Lai) is somehow much different and far worse than killing anonymous persons with bombs from an airplane (as, for instance, at Hiroshima). According to this popular theory, killing Qaddafi with a knife or a pistol or a poisoned prayer rug (the North African equivalent of the poisoned cigars the CIA once planned to deliver to Fidel) would be assassination, but killing him as part of a scheme to blow his whole neighborhood to kingdom come would simply be an accident of war.

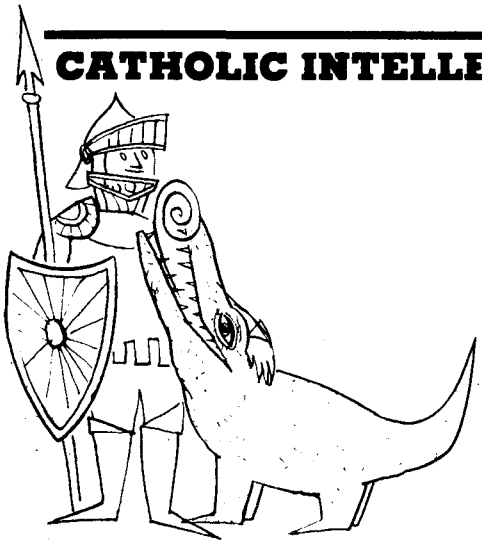
Nonsense. Assassination is assassination, whether done with knife, gun, poison, or explosives dropped from airplanes that fly in the long way from Great Britain.

And if it is asked, "What's wrong with assassination in a case like this?" the answer is: That way lies madness. Once open, that door and the world will soon be littered with the corpses of murdered leaders of nations. Assassination will become the continuation of politics by other means.

I fear our bombing of Libya taught a lesson to no one but Qaddafi. Worse still, I fear it may have taught him the wrong lesson.

DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The summons to responsibility

DAVID J. O'BRIEN

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH has rarely been a comfortable home for intellectuals. In the post-Reformation church, scholars were expected to provide ammunition for religious wars, and the critical, imaginative temperament of artists and intellectuals seemed dangerous, even disloyal. In the nineteenth century, ultramontane Catholicism institutionalized such attitudes, reducing scholarship to apologetics and driving restless minds and spirits out of the church or into a sort of Catholic underground. The world crises of the twentieth century, from World War I to the Cold War, gradually undermined the legitimacy of Catholicism's reactionary ideology. But they left its organizational legacy intact until Vatican II, after which those institutional controls seemed to collapse. Honesty, openness, and dialogue replaced loyalty, solidarity, and orthodoxy, and Christian scholars joined hands across denominational frontiers.

In the United States, a growing number of young Catholics followed intellectual careers. Many joined the faculties of non-Catholic colleges and universities, and Catholic higher education pursued with almost unseemly enthusiasm an academic excellence devoid of any particular Catholic or even Christian reference. Bishops provided opportunities for serious continuing education for their priests. They sent religious educators and other specialized personnel to summer schools and training institutes. Despite Pope Paul VI's public worries about overly venturesome speculation, it seemed intellectuals had finally found a secure place with the Roman Catholic church.

Yet, it was less secure than it appeared. There were at least three problems which should have been self-evident. First, the history of Protestant theology, Scripture studies, and ethics in the previous century had forecast the way in which modern consciousness could erode the historical foundations of Christian faith and render problematic the whole structure of institutional Catholicism. Thomas Sheehan's essay on "The End of Catholicism," published two years ago in the *New York Review of Books* (June 14, 1984), is perhaps symptomatic. A philosopher of Catholic background, a scholar of Heidegger and Rahner, and an apparently appreciative observer of post-Vatican II "liberal" scholarship, Sheehan argued that the best contemporary Catholic theologians had undermined the foundational doctrine of the Resurrection, and that it was now time to acknowledge that fact. Sheehan rather innocently followed where the truth seemed to lead, to a religionless Christianity of the type advocated some years earlier by secular theology and echoing liberal Protestantism of the nineteenth century. Although his views were sharply challenged by many of those he claimed to be interpreting, one suspects that not a few Catholic intellectuals, affected as much by the spirit of the times as by Sheehan's precise argument, assumed with him that this was the logical outcome of the council's dispensation. In this, ironically, they were in agreement with Catholics United for the Faith and some of the diehards in the curia. But neither the latter nor the pope and the bishops could be expected to accept such a prescription lying down.

Second, the end of repression within the church was widely believed to open the door to a more intelligent understanding of Christian faith among the people of God. In the United States, initial renewal strategies following Vatican II often involved a combination of academic training for church personnel and "adult education" for the laity. Again, familiarity with Protestant history might have enabled reformers to anticipate that not everyone would jump at the chance to learn, even in domesticated doses, about historical criticism of the Bible, symbolic interpretations of doctrine, or the social and cultural contextualization of morality. In fact, that history suggests that when the intellectuals took charge of the interpretation of Scripture and ministers became convinced of the need to reinterpret doctrine and morality, the people might turn to the Bible and rely on their own experience to understand it, in what Nathan Hatch has called a "democratic hermeneutic."

DAVID O'BRIEN *teaches history at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. The above article is adapted from a talk given at a dinner to honor John Tracy Ellis by the American Catholic Historical Association last spring.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Charismatic renewal, scriptural and a peculiarly Catholic doctrinal fundamentalism, and stubborn, unreflective loyalty to "traditional morality" have plagued modernizing reformers, echoing previous Protestant experiences in the United States, and raising within the Catholic church the chronic American problem of anti-intellectualism. Theologians might claim to be transferring their loyalty from the institutional church to the people of God, but more than one has been shocked, if not repulsed, by the experience that at least some of God's people are less than appreciative of their work.

Third, intellectuals — freed from roles defined by the church — had to relocate themselves. They could easily become captives of another set of institutions, particularly in a society where knowledge has become specialized, professionalized, and collaborative. The obvious example would be the Catholic sociologists who, having welcomed the recognition accorded to the discipline of sociology, no longer felt the need for an organization of Catholic sociologists, and carried on their work independently within universities and professions. They replaced one set of institutional relationships with another, assuming both different opportunities and constraints, and replacing concern about orthodoxy with concern about tenure, publications, and grants.

Most self-respecting scholars wish to resist the subordination of truth to power, even if that power claims a divine mandate. In self-defense scholars call upon commonly accepted Western values of academic and cultural freedom, in most cases from a new location within the university. Sharing now in the unaccountable professionalism of the faculty, they unwittingly wed themselves to a new system of power and privilege, more subtly resistant to the critical spirit.

The resolution of these tensions is not to be found in a resubmission to irresponsible ecclesiastical authority, nor in a scholarly professionalism which cuts all ties to the church, but in a continuing struggle to combine Catholic faith and membership with authentic intellectual integrity, to be honest about the responsibilities contained in the phrase "Catholic intellectual." That in turn requires a constructive engagement in building public life within the church, anchored, as it must be, precisely on the boundaries where the self-conscious Catholic subculture intersects the broader culture of which the church is a part. Models for this often painful struggle exist in the past in the great figures of the liberal Catholic tradition, like John Henry Newman, and in the present in one of Newman's most ardent American disciples, John Tracy Ellis.

IN SPEECHES and papers for thirty years Monsignor Ellis has argued that the Catholic intellectual tradition contains valuable resources for contemporary culture and for the wider effort to preserve and renew the liberal arts and the humanities. Equally important, the church, today's church, for all its problems, is a vibrant and hopeful community within which to carry on the intellectual enterprise.

Ellis's confidence is not widely shared in the Catholic academic community. Conservatives like James Hitchcock argue that, just as Catholic politicians often win office by ignoring Catholic interests, many Catholic intellectuals have succeeded in the arts and sciences while leaving behind or privatizing their Catholicity. No one who visits university campuses or reads a selection of journals could deny that there is some truth to that. Still, many who make this argument seem to cast it only in terms of some kind of betrayal of the church and the Catholic people. One hears in their charges a strong echo of the "fortress mentality" of the old Catholic subculture. One senses that the "distinctively Catholic contribution" they fear is being bartered away is valued less for how it may heal the problems of the culture than for how it serves the prestige and self-interest of the church.

In fact, the problem of the Catholic intellectual *within* the church has gone well beyond the terms of loyalty and institutional subordination of the last generation. Scholars or artists who are priests or nuns may not always find a comfortable home within church structures, but in general there remain nonetheless considerable avenues for the expression of dissent. For lay people, certainly, the once prominent questions of ecclesiastical authority and freedom of expression have not vanished but are no longer central.

Pastorally, however, there is a wider problem, and it is probably worse than a generation ago. Catholics who value intellectual activity and try to live their faith in an inquiring, reflective way are no more apt to find support, appreciation, or stimulation in the local parish than they were in the 1950s. Monsignor Ellis once insisted that most of the time the good priest is a "bookish man"; there are no more of them today than were in years past, perhaps less. Furthermore, if the Protestant churches provide any evidence, the non- (not necessarily anti-) intellectual character of local church life may well be a permanent feature of American religion, one which intellectuals will have to attend to with something more constructive than complaints.

On a pastoral and ecclesial level, the problem is closely connected with that of the laity. Post-conciliar renewal has often come to mean a deeper and fuller involvement of the laity *in* the church rather than a greater involvement in all the institutions of our country, where the success of the laity has sometimes been seen as problematic. In their working lives, the laity find themselves less beyond or outside the church than simply detached from it. This detachment results no more from their ignoring the church than from the church ignoring them. Until church leaders learn — or care to learn — to affirm the secular lives of the laity, until they take seriously the idea that, as Archbishop Weakland has insisted, the lay person in the world is there as church, as much church as the deacon or lay minister working within the community itself, the church will not assist the political culture to face matters of war, abortion, and injustice, nor contribute anything more to the nation than resounding "no's." Nor will it attract the commitment of those Catholic scholars and intellectuals it so desperately needs.

The old Catholic subculture, which shaped the definition of the problem in the past, is gone beyond recall, replaced by a culture of voluntarism whose full weight is only beginning to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be felt. Voluntarism has made the exercise of arbitrary authority less and less tenable, but in exchange it imposes new obligations. If Catholics who are intellectuals ignore the church, or deal with it only in private terms, and if they share no responsibility for reforming the church and its structures and renewing its faith and community life, they can hardly complain if they find no hospitable home. Their responsibility does not end with raising questions and opening up debate. It must include taking seriously the need to give substance to the word "Catholic," to strengthen and reinvigorate Catholic organizations for research, teaching, writing, dialogue. Catholic colleges and universities, Catholic journals and magazines, Catholic research centers and a whole range of institutions for exchange between scholars, artists, diocesan and parish staffs, are all necessary if mutual disaffiliation is to be overcome and the words "Catholic intellectual" are to take on historic meaning. This is not a problem of left or right, but of public life and genuine shared responsibility within the church.

LOST INNOVATION

WHEN CATHOLIC WOMEN PREACHED

THREE IMPORTANT questions raised by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in their preparatory report for last year's synod underscored the increasingly problematic role of women in the church, the waning of popular interest in evangelization since Vatican II, and the growing need to clarify the meaning of ministry in a changing church. Perhaps a timely look at an experimental women's ministry to the American unchurched, launched three decades before the council, might provide food for thought.

As recently as the late 1940s, it was possible for a small cadre of self-styled "women missionaries from Chicago," members of the Catholic Evidence Guild of Rosary College (River Forest, Illinois), to spend their summers street preaching in Oklahoma, North Carolina, and Louisiana *with the blessing* of the local bishops and the overworked mission priests. Moreover, these young college women were not the first laywomen to propagate the faith on the pavement or from the tailgates of automobiles parked in the highways and byways. Martha Moore Avery, a convert from socialism and Unitarianism, did similar work in Boston beginning in 1917. Maisie Ward first mounted the outdoor platform of the Catholic Evidence Guild in London's Hyde Park shortly after the end of the First World War, and subsequently worked to popularize the Guild idea among lay women and men on both sides of the Atlantic. It was Ward's lecture at Rosary College in late 1934 that stimulated an interest in outdoor evangelization and led to the establishment of a branch of the Evidence Guild at the college the following spring.

Post-Vatican II Catholics who are familiar with feminist concerns within the church approach the Rosary College Guild with mixed feelings. On the one hand, the Rosary College street preachers represent the vanguard of the transitory Catholic convert crusade which gained momentum in the American Catholic church in the 1920s and peaked in the 1950s under the leadership of Father John A. O'Brien of Notre Dame. They were among the first to hear the challenge trumpeted by Father O'Brien in the late 1940s:

> The Witnesses of Jehovah increased their membership in America from 44,000 in 1940 to 500,000 by the end of 1946 — an increase of more than 1,000 percent! What is the secret of their incredible growth? The flaming missionary zeal of their members. If our Catholic laymen and women display similar zeal, we shall win for Christ the vast bulk of the churchless 80,000,000 people in our land within a few decades.

The Rosary College street preachers embodied the same nascent confidence and competitive spirit which emboldened O'Brien and his followers. They constituted a significant departure from the stereotypical "pay, pray, and obey" ethos of the American laity in the early twentieth century, signifying a new awareness that evangelization represents a lay, as well as a clerical, obligation, a duty for laywomen as well as laymen. In one sense one might see the Rosary College Guild as a precursor of the spirit of Vatican II with its emphasis on the church as the "People of God" and the laity's obligation to assume the burdens of a church bursting its ghetto walls.

On the other hand, the Rosary College street preachers now lurk in the shadows of the church we have lost since the council. They peer out at us from their photographs, a dignified company clad in light summer dresses and spectator pumps, clutching their white gloves as they brave the gawking rural Southern Protestant crowds gathered outside Bennett's Drug Store or Waldren's Hotel and Grill. These women sacrificed the leisurely, sociable summers enjoyed by their classmates in order to explain the sacraments, purgatory, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the saints to motley crowds of passersby. Apparently they were never tempted to stray from a strict doctrinal party line, or to grapple with the controversies related to the church's moral and social teachings which have so preoccupied subsequent generations of Catholic college women. The Rosary College street preachers utilized the hierarchical system which permitted them to speak with the consent of the bishop. They took for granted their right to be street preachers but never dreamed of extending their ambitions to the sacramental priesthood. While they may not provide a model of female dissent within the church today, they do represent a precedent, an example of one women's ministry approved by the hierarchy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Solution of the problem of Catholic intellectual life, then, demands the reinvigoration of public dialogue within the church, not for its own sake, but for the sake of all those "joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of the men and women of this age" of which Vatican II spoke. One could point to the enormous contribution Catholic scholars are making to contemporary Christian theology and Scripture studies, to public dialogue on the ethical issues of contemporary medicine, biomedical research, nuclear arms, and social policy for evidence that the Catholic tradition has great constructive resources to bring to bear on crucial issues of national and international life. The church, with its global reach and long memory, has the potential to help Americans break through their parochialism and obsession with the moment. Catholic experience contains wisdom about things like marriage and family, community and work, which could bring hope and a renewed sense of personal and historic possibility to our fellow citizens.

The Rosary College Evidence Guild, a bold experimental laywomen's ministry, remains an enigma which partakes of the spirit of Aimee Semple McPherson along with that of Sister Theresa Kane without surrendering the distinct aura of *The Bells of St. Mary's* and *Faith of Our Fathers*. Although it died a natural death over a decade before Vatican II, the Evidence Guild represents the best features of American Catholicism just before and just after the council. Like the Catholic Workers, it serves as a reminder that courageous innovation can issue forth from a profound appreciation of the abiding certainties of the Catholic faith. It catalyzed a latent activism which had long characterized certain segments of the American Catholic church, from the early lay trustees to the Knights of Columbus and the pioneers in the Grail to the Christian Family movements.

Today a retrospective glance at the former street preachers from Rosary College remains poignant, even timely. Surveying the articles written by Guild members for the Catholic press during the thirties and forties, one is struck by how comfortable the Rosary College students appear to have been with the title "street preacher" in a church which categorically denied women the right to preach. Although at least one priest-advisor tried to persuade the young women that "street speaking" or "teaching" were more appropriate terms for what they were doing, the Rosary College Guild continued to describe its work as street preaching, and the veterans still use the word today.

The longer one contemplates the Rosary College experiment, the more one is struck by the probability that the street preaching activities of the students raised fewer eyebrows within the church in the mid-thirties than they might today, a half century later, despite Vatican II. When some Catholics accused them of compromising the dignity of the church and sinking to the level of the Salvation Army, Guild members boldly upheld their revivalistic methods in the confident tones we now tend to associate with American Catholicism just prior to the council. As Dorothy Golden wrote for *The Catholic World* in 1938: "We women missionaries are strong advocates of revivals of the right sort, and the spread of Catholicism is undoubtedly the only thing that will revive this country [sic] so you are all invited to *take part* in the big religious revival."

A group of former street preachers from Rosary College congregated in Chicago in the spring of 1985. The meeting confirmed the impression that the Guild's public apostolate looks more radical two decades *after* the close of Vatican II than it did in the midst of the convert crusade which preceded the council. "We didn't think of ourselves as part of the women's ministry in the church, but perhaps we were," admitted some.

The irony implicit in a retrospective assessment of the work done by the Rosary College street preachers shines through the following statement of Mary Virginia Doyle Gorman, an active veteran in the Guild in the 1940s. She recently compared her college activities with those of her children who grew up in the post-Vatican II church.

> Although several of my own children gave service to social service agencies and to the poor . . . through missions during their college years, I cannot envision any of them standing up on street corners preaching. In fact, they think I was pretty weird to have done this — and there are times I can't believe I did it myself, although it seemed quite normal and ordinary at the time.

Perhaps the most important — and most haunting — aspect of the little-known story of the Rosary College Catholic Evidence Guild is encapsulated in the final clause: *it seemed quite normal and ordinary at the time.*

Although those at both poles of the Catholic spectrum might enlist the aid of popular stereotypes which emphasize the salubrious or tragic impact of the council upon the church, most of us know that such generalizations beg the important questions at hand. If we are to determine how to apply the spirit of Vatican II to the problems and challenges facing the church in the 1980s, we need to pay more attention to the changing mind of the American laity. One way to begin this process is to ask how the "normal and ordinary" ministry of the Rosary College street preachers became incredible — in fact, "pretty weird" — to the generation raised on the teachings of Vatican II.

(Debra Campbell, a church historian with a special interest in modern Catholicism, is an assistant professor of religion at Gettysburg College. She is presently working on a history of lay Catholic evangelism in the United States and England.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But there are several missing ingredients, none more important than the recognition that the effective utilization of such resources — the preservation of memory, the actualization of universality, the public presentation of wisdom and experience — all require organization, leadership, and structured, purposeful action. In short, the institutional church — hierarchy, office, diocese, parish — and independent Catholic colleges, universities, associations, and organizations are important, indeed indispensable. In an age of freedom and voluntarism, the quality and effectiveness of such institutions and organizations depend upon the commitment and intelligent participation of their members, especially those whose training and experience give them particular responsibilities for the corporate life and public witness of the church.

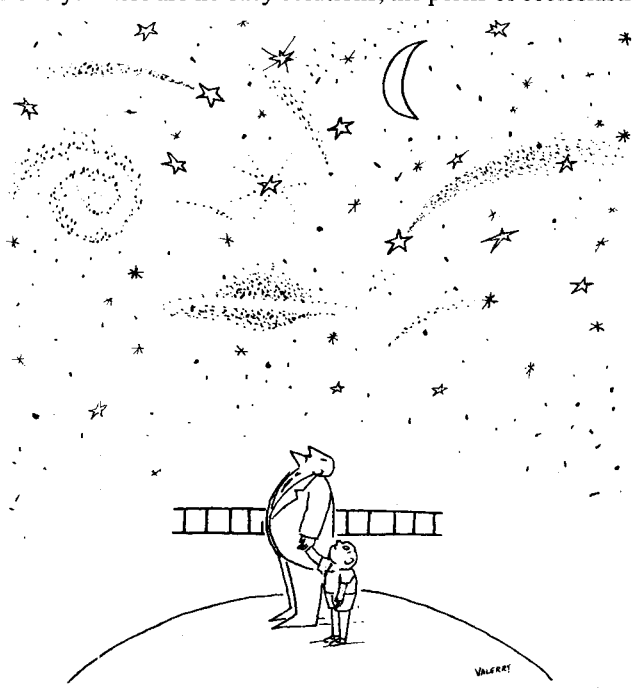
THIRTY YEARS after the publication of John Tracy Ellis's famous essay on "American Catholics and the Intellectual Life," the challenge of Catholic intellectual life remains unresolved. It is true there are now plenty of Catholics who are intellectuals. They have access to the public culture and to opportunities for shaping the public consensus beyond anything the earlier generations could have hoped for. Against numerous predictions, the church still has a thriving network of colleges and universities.

To be sure, the quality of this success is considerably more in doubt than its quantity. Andrew Greeley, for instance, has leveled a scathing attack on the quality of Catholic higher education, a conclusion with which Ellis sadly agrees. While welcoming the atmosphere of intellectual and academic freedom hard won after the Council, Ellis has recently commented that, judged by the numbers of research grants awarded to scholars in Catholic colleges and universities, "the progress of Catholic institutions in regard to excellence in the humanities and the liberal arts has been anything but notable, to put it mildly."

Ellis, however, remains committed less to achieving excellence by secular standards than to the invigoration of the great tradition of Christian humanism, so that Catholic intellectuals can make a distinctly Catholic contribution to American culture and a uniquely American contribution to the church. It is the separation of faith and reason, so marked in Catholic institutions, which disturbs him, producing what he calls a "schizophrenia" which obtains "by reason of claims made by their duel allegiance to religious faith and academic autonomy." He correctly believes academic leaders are reluctant to face frankly and openly their institutions' religious commitment because they are fearful of the "ridicule of secular university colleagues or even of a few aggressive members of their own faculties whose norms of judgment are so largely influenced by what they regard as the accepted practices of secular academic circles." In this, Ellis believes they reflect the experience of contemporary Catholics, now at home in American culture and uncertain precisely how to express their Catholicity in the midst of life. Just as they respond by confining religion to personal faith and private life, so Catholic universities marginalize religion into one academic department and into the campus equivalents of home and family.

Thus the problematic element today, even more than in 1955 when Ellis presented his famous paper on Catholic intellectuals, is how distinctly and deeply "Catholic" are these intellectuals, these universities, and the very public presence of Catholic lay people? If people stumble over this, if they are unsure whether "Catholic" adds anything to their work, if they are uncomfortable with the very idea of adding that modifier to a school or to themselves, then, we must conclude that the project Monsignor Ellis called attention to thirty years ago — a project at the heart of his life's work — has been a failure. But if Catholic scholars, writers, thinkers, artists today wish to share and reinvigorate such a project, they will best do so not by lengthy arguments about the precise meaning of the word "Catholic," but by reentering the public life of the modern church; seeking out the issues and the problems people confront; responding to the numerous invitations coming from popes and bishops; rebuilding communities of conversation, so as to shape the quality of public discourse and to help their people form their consciences on public issues.

It is the height of folly to think that any organization, including the church, will act intelligently, or that the quality of its cultural life will be adequate to the scope of its mission, unless intelligent people are dedicated to it, devoting to it at least some of their time and talent. There is a direct connection between the quality of church life, the vigor of its evangelical proclamation, and the strength and vitality of its colleges and universities, publications, and learned societies. The issues facing Catholic higher education, particularly the relationship between institutional commitment and mission on the one hand, and the professionalism of the faculty on the other — with all that means for undergraduate curriculum, for research priorities, for faculty development — are of obvious and crucial importance for those who take the intellectual life seriously. There are no easy solutions; the perils of ecclesiasti-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cal control and confessional exclusiveness as well as the perils of uncritical secularization are real. Trustees, administrators, faculty, and benefactors all share responsibility; for the most part they pass the buck, blame each other, and settle in practice for policies which allow them to muddle through.

Thus the debate over Catholic intellectual life comes down to four central points: (1) many Catholics are now successfully engaged in the intellectual professions; (2) Catholic higher education has failed to achieve excellence; (3) there is a separation of religious identity and mission from much of the research and teaching in Catholic institutions; and (4) the church's intellectual life in its parishes remains relatively poor as does the church's engagement in the wider institutions of everyday existence. The question seems relatively clear: Will Catholic scholars, writers, and artists be persuaded to participate more energetically and constructively in the church's public life and ministry and thereby develop a network of Catholic intellectuals in many fields and disciplines who will share in the task of making the church's contribution to American culture more creative and effective?

Surely one answer to this pressing question is for ecclesiastical leaders to recognize the need to affirm and support Catholic thinkers and creators. Another is for academic leaders to cooperate with bishops in reforming seminary education and ministry training, emphasizing high academic standards, serious study, and research. Surely, too, the leaders in Catholic higher education must translate their high sounding words about Catholic identity into effective strategies for attracting, supporting, and rewarding scholars who seek to work within the Catholic tradition and define their research and teaching at least in part in response to the needs of the American church. And, finally, organizations of Catholic scholars and intellectuals should try to make their hitherto modest efforts at cooperation strategic and programmatic.

There is plenty about today's church that inspires hope: its turn toward the poor, its defense of human rights, the rich pluralism of its theological scholarship, the challenge of the recent pastoral letters of the American bishops. The flip side of the injustices visited upon American sisters is the astonishing vitality of Catholic women. The flip side of misguided Roman interventions into American church affairs is the struggling emergence of our national episcopal conference, providing for the first time in a hundred years the organizational capability to engage in serious dialogue with Rome and sister churches while giving a long-needed focus for the church's public presence beyond simply the efforts of individuals and those of local parishes.

Yet, these promising movements will bear fruit in the United States only if serious people, mature enough to ride out the tensions and ambiguities present in our moment in history, decide to devote a portion of their talent and energy to the church, specifically to the intellectual life of the church, its cultural enrichment, and its dialogue with the larger society. The recent pastoral letters represent an effort to avoid the twin shoals of the sectarian isolation championed by radicals of left and right, and the final accommodation to contemporary culture which would be the outcome of the sharp separation of religion from secular life championed by Catholic neoconservatives. If the experiment represented by the pastorals is to work, if the middle way of Cardinal Newman and Monsignor Ellis is to remain a viable option, Catholic scholars must decide to make it so.

B.A. St. Andrews

The Half-Life of Ulysses

Long after Ulysses and his passion
for upheaval were extinguished

and long after Virgil sang arms
and heroes into flame, my father

lived nor was he carried home
upon his shield. He whistled "I'll

be with you in apple-blossom time"
boyishly and held "Stardust Memories"

dear long after the stench of collapsed
cities and seared flesh stole

the precise scent of apples from his
imaginary garden. Once and only once

upon a time he leapt aboard the Ship
of State; on and on he sailed

toward foreign shores: shores
which did not recognize themselves.

Charred bag beneath ash knuckles he
stalked where shadows cowered

against still crumbling walls. Rubble
amidst bone, he knelt in stardust,

gathered his shattered atoms and arose:
Dr. Nagasaki. Then, like any Ulysses,

he returned to the faithful wife,
the russet-faced children, the usual

desperadoes: himself in exile. Still
he whistled as charred steaks hissed

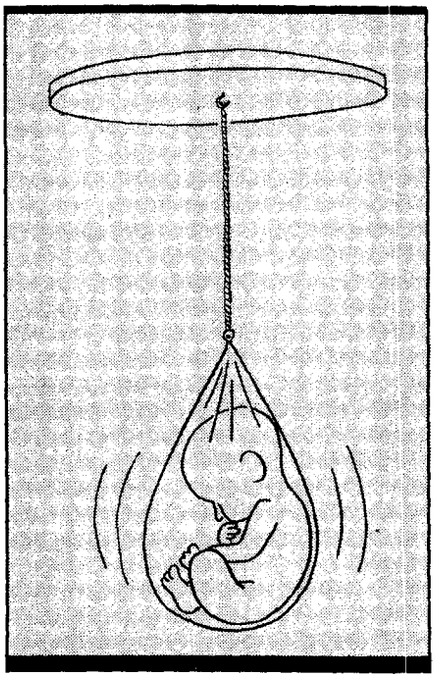
in flame and only shivered when children
sang (their voices frail as wind

chimes in the slanting August light)
Ashes . . . ashes . . . all fall down."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Abortion, pluralism, feminism

READERS DISCUSS THE ABORTION ISSUE



On not getting off the hook

Shoreview, Minn.

To the Editors: Joan C. Callahan's article ["The Fetus & Fundamental Rights," April 11] states as one of the reasons that Bishop Timlin's analogy of abortion and slavery is incorrect is that ". . . there are no such open questions about involuntary slavery." Before slavery was abolished in this country many people thought involuntary slavery was moral. The Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case ruled that a black slave was not a person before the court, which is not too different from *Roe v. Wade*.

. . . Ms. Callahan appears to support the right to life at the point of biological viability. Will abortion rights groups support this? Children born in the second trimester are being saved now. Scientific advances will bring this back to an ever earlier point in pregnancy.

Callahan refers to the woman seeking an abortion as being an unwilling life support system. But many of us are that for the old, the sick, the mentally retarded, young children, etc. Does she imply that we have no obligation to care for these people?

Callahan states, in reference to the problem of an abortion to save the mother's life, that "anti-abortionists . . . view that the woman and the fetus are not of equal moral stature after all." Nothing of the sort is implied, if the "life support system" goes the child will die, it might just be good common sense to let one die instead of both.

But the real problem with her article is that it doesn't solve the problem for the Catholic liberal Democrats who are morally opposed to abortion but vote for liberal abortion laws and laws to force taxpayers to pay for abortions. Who wants to vote for politicians who will not stand up for their moral principles? I would much rather vote for someone who thought abortion was moral and worked for liberal abortion laws than someone who is strongly morally opposed to abortion but votes for it. Ms. Callahan does nothing to get these politicians off the hook.

PHILIP LAMB

Property & analogy

Park Ridge, Ill.

To the Editors: Joan Callahan contends that the reason why slavery was immoral is because "it is unjust to enslave people against their wills."

Slavery was wrong because it was justified by a false premise, i.e., that imported blacks were "property" and since they were legally classified as property, they were denied those rights accorded to human beings.

This is why the analogy with abortion is pertinent, because the pro-choice adherents contend that the fetus is not human and, therefore, not entitled to rights. If we concede that the fetus is mere tissue, then it is rightfully the "property" of the bearer to be suctioned out or otherwise disposed of at her will. That *is* the issue.

E.F. HALPIN

Consensus & the birth of infanticide

Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Editors: Permit these comments on Joan Callahan's treatment of abortion and public policy. *First*, Callahan's end-run around the infanticide problem fails.

She apparently concedes newborns lack the same human-rights-triggering qualities that, in her view, fetuses lack. Rather than condone legal infanticide along with legal abortion, however, Callahan protects infants with *"convention"*: We do not really believe infants are persons; they are closer to kittens. Because their protection does not infringe exclusively on one person, though, we can treat them as persons. We can ascribe a humanity not actually present. There are, Callahan assures us, excellent reasons for such a convention.

Well, there are also excellent reasons for not pretending infants are persons if

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

indeed they are not. Consider the radically and hopelessly deformed newborn that faces only pain and sensory deprivation. If it is not really a person, let's kill it before it becomes one only to suffer. Compassion demands no less.

And what of the perpetrator of infanticide? Suppose a person enters a foundling nursery full of newborns. He gently kills twelve orphans. This person has, in Callahan's reality, done nothing more inherently reprehensible than killing a dozen kittens. How can we punish the perpetrator as a terrible criminal? He knew the law. So, arguably, he consented to his punishment. Still, civility requires proportionality between a deed's intrinsic evil, and the sanction inflicted.

Ponder, finally, infants' and parents' rights in a society that cannot quickly assume care for a newborn. Say it took three months before such a society could relieve parents of responsibility.

Under such circumstances, a convention against infanticide (by omission or commission) would exclusively burden the parents. Shouldn't the convention apply still?

More to the point, could we ever honestly characterize infanticide's proscription as merely convention? Or are infants, and non-viable but brain-active fetuses, more akin to sleeping persons than akin to kittens?

Second, Callahan faults the slavery/abortion analogy because "there are no such open questions about involuntary slavery." There are no such open questions because partisans closed them.

Public consensus on initially open questions forms around political efforts. Legislative drives gauge, encourage, and shape opinion. Confusion arises only when political players masquerade as head-counting referees.

My *third* point reaches beyond abortion. Callahan asserts "purely religious reasons" are insufficient for the imposition of legal restraints on others. This assertion carries too much presumption and illusion to go without comment.

All social beliefs boil down to intuitions. We can enjoy dialogue and endure argument but all positions rest on certain unpackable, indefensible, invulnerable premises. This includes positions on the balance, and borders, between order and liberty.

Why should the citizen with purely religious premises take a back seat to the citizen with purely secular ones?

We, of course, could tune-out both and acclaim the citizen who has never fallen into agreement with a group in his life. But we should aim to make public policy more correct than original. . . .

KEVIN M. DOYLE

On not reaching the same conclusion

Albany, N.Y.

To the Editors: I read with interest Professor Callahan's article. She has obviously thought long and deeply about the difficult question of abortion, and I'm sure her colleagues in philosophy will have something to say about the forcefulness and validity of her arguments.

I would like to offer, from my perspective, just one cautionary note about her presentation. Professor Callahan speaks, several times, of "Catholic liberal Democrats," almost as though there were a political party in our country similar to the Christian Democrats of other countries. There isn't. And I don't think this type of categorization is any more helpful than it would be to call others "Protestant conservative Republicans." The list could be extended, of course, so that we would end up identifying politicians primarily as "Jewish," or "Mormon," or "Christian fundamentalist," or "agnostic," for example.

Still, Professor Callahan is right, I think, in saying that "there is much more to be said" on the issue of abortion. But the motivation cannot be the safety or survival of a political faction that, in fact, does not exist.

That reservation aside, I believe Professor Callahan has made a thoughtful contribution to the abortion debate. Her analysis, like mine, may not be "wholly adequate," but it demonstrates, certainly, that serious, morally concerned people do not always reach the same conclusions on this question.

MARIO M. CUOMO
Governor of New York

Presuming innocence

Fredericksburg, Va.

To the Editors: Her article on fetal rights shows that Joan C. Callahan has done her homework. She is absolutely correct in everything she says about fertilization and human embryology, including the statement that science has nothing to say about personhood.

She then says that pro-lifers need "to demonstrate why we must conclude that accepting the biological claim that a fetus

is a unique individual human being commits us to accepting the moral claim that it has fundamental rights as well." This statement assumes that the burden of proof lies on the pro-lifer, which she first needs to establish.

I contend that the burden of proving that the fetus does not have fundamental rights lies on the pro-choicer for the following reasons: our country's founding documents (which must be read as a whole), the spirit on which this country was founded, and over a century of legal and medical tradition all support the case for the unborn child's right to life. The purpose of government is not to decide which individual human beings are worthy of protection, but to protect the rights of all. To do otherwise is to establish the precedent that we are all guilty of non-personhood until proven innocent.

Women who abort should not be sub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ject to the same sanctions as those who murder because their emotional state at the time of aborting mitigates their guilt. However, the same cannot be said of the abortionist.

EDWARD C. FREILING
Founder, Scientists for Life

The business of aiding & abetting

Walnut Creek, Calif.

To the Editors: Though generally judicious in her review of the arguments against abortion, Joan C. Callahan assumes too much in her reading of Walter Mondale's mind: "accepting the fetus as a full-fledged person commits us to measures in practice that even those who are deeply pro-life cannot fully accept. . . . If anti-abortionists want to allow abortions in cases where the woman's life is at stake . . . the woman and the fetus are *not* of equal moral stature after all."

Though opponents of abortion may not *want to allow* exceptions (even where the unborn is the "innocent aggressor"), they may recognize, as I believe Mondale did, that total prohibition is unenforceable, because it would require exhaustive policing and would be opposed by a preponderant public opinion.

Not long ago, when adultery and suicide, for example, were both punishable crimes (still are, in some codes), indictment and punishment were applied with considerable discretion — as is the case even with homicide. A distinction is made between those who undertake such offenses and those in the business of aiding and abetting them. Similar distinctions could be made even if abortion were totally illegal.

There remains "the particularly intimate burden of bearing an unwanted child." Bearing, not rearing for life. As a self-limiting obligation, it's still not comparable to many others we incur — such as caring for an unwanted parent.

LEON LUKASZEWSKI

The 'personally against, but . . .' crowd

Lebanon, Pa.

To the Editors: While most of the rationalizations for the legalized abortion position presented by Joan C. Callahan were well addressed and countered in the following issue ["Abortion & the Sexual Agenda," April 28], I feel called to add a couple of short comments.

Much of Joan Callahan's position hinges on the idea that decisions made in the legislative arena must be based upon grounds from which beliefs of religious origin have been excluded. This peculiar, but these days not uncommon, idea rests on the argument that First Amendment religion clauses and a pluralistic society somehow prohibit political stands based upon religious belief. That such a restraint is imposed by either law or tradition is highly questionable.

Such an interpretation of the amendment confuses the framers' concerns regarding privileged institutions with their determination to insure the religious liberty of individuals. Such liberty, guaranteed by the "free exercise" clause, includes the right of an individual to base a vote, in the polling place or in the legislative chambers, upon religious beliefs. Such a right in no way contradicts the ban on institutional dictate expressed in the "non-establishment" clause. Further, given that the right to amend is written into the Constituion, it is entirely proper to advocate and pursue positions in direct contradiction to the present form of that document, as long as that advocacy and pursuit is conducted within the prescribed channels. A taste for liquor was no bar to voting for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

The second pillar upon which the "personally against, but . . ." crowd support their two-minded behavior seems to be a voluntary self-restriction concerning which of their convictions they will allow to influence the carrying out of their public role. Thus, if a conviction they hold derives solely from their religious faith, they will not act so as to build laws based upon the implications of that belief. This stand [assumes] that in a society of multiple faiths it would be morally wrong to do so; it begs the question of from where that particular moral value derives; it raises a more fundamental question of just what, rationally speaking, should be the basis of the laws of this or any other society. For if ideas concerning the ultimate nature of reality and of human beings, which is what religion is, cannot form the basis for the ordering of society and the constituting of its laws, then any effort to do those things becomes a futile and perverse enterprise.

MARK GRONCESKI

Pinpointing human uniqueness

Norwood, Mass.

To the Editors: Joan C. Callahan is giving serious thought to a subject receiving trivial treatment by most newspaper and magazine columnists. Thank you, Joan. This first article rightly (I believe) hones in on the distinctiveness of the human life, entering the "moral community" when it is discernibly unique. Callahan pinpoints this uniqueness at the moment of birth. And she speaks of that as a moment of personhood.

The notion of "person" is of ultimate importance in the matter of abortion. Callahan is correct when she invokes it. But the notion of personhood has a long history in Western thought, especially with the articulation of Christianity's chief revelation, the Trinity of God. The notion has been a central part of Catholic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and secular thought ever since, growing through eras of extreme abstraction like the medieval "rational supposit" and the nineteenth-century "center of consciousness" (which interpretation rendered the word "person" heretical in Trinitarian theology).

Callahan's neglect of history — she does not mention any definition of "person" — leaves us with just another opinion (we have many) as to when abortion is morally wrong. To neglect the development of the notion of "person" is to risk assuming one's own definition and thereby begging the question, which Callahan does.

WILLIAM F. LUCEY

The achievement of personhood

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Joan C. Callahan argues that the fetus has the fundamental right to life when the fetus becomes a person. She concludes that personhood attaches only at birth or, perhaps earlier, if the fetus is viable upon induced abortion. Her conclusion is that personhood is achieved at such time as others can begin to nurture the child. At such point, the natural mother no longer has the right to will the death of the fetus.

The author's theory runs into major problems by virtue of recent advances in medical science in that our doctor friends have now demonstrated that they can fertilize the egg in a laboratory, implant it in the womb of a "surrogate mother," and bring the child to full-term birth. Thus, if we accept the author's test, that personhood attaches when the fetus can be nourished independent of the genetic mother, that moment is the moment of conception.

Ms. Callahan is obviously a person of exquisite good will and is horrified by Dr. Adam's treating fetuses irreverently by cutting off their heads and sustaining the head by mechanical means. She rejects the doctor's contention that if a mother has the right to induce the death of the fetus by abortion, he has the right to experiment with that fetus. But if the author is right, the doctor is right!

On the other hand, the author finds it difficult to accept the concept that a victim of rape would have the obligation of carrying the baby to term because the victim did not consent to conception. She would conclude that, as a matter of basic human rights, one is not morally required to provide for the needs of another person if one did not consent to the assumption of that obligation.

I'm not sure that the author would seek to justify such a general proposition if she carefully reflected on it. Life frequently presents us with the challenge of caring for the needs of others where we did nothing to create that need and, in fact, may have fought valiantly to forestall the creation of that need. Isn't that, after all, the situation which prevails when we look at the world's hungry? The author certainly did not consent to those persons being hungry, and I would be willing to bet that she would do all in her power to prevent the creation of that hunger. But if the hunger exists, she would respond generously to alleviate it, as a matter of duty.

It would seem to me that the same principle applies to the fetus where the conception is the result of rape. The fetus has a need, and the fact that the mother did not consent to the creation of the person she carries clearly does not justify inflicting death upon that person.

A few further comments:

The author places great weight on the concept that the acorn and the oak are not the same type of being. I believe that most thoughtful persons would reject that conclusion.

The author would dismiss any arguments based on the teachings of religion. Thus, she would appear to conclude that a religious value is not one with a logical foundation and is, of necessity, not one which has been subjected to thoughtful analysis. Thus, it would appear that the author would summarily reject the argument that homicide should be outlawed because of the religious mandate, "Thou shalt not kill." The author would instead insist that before the law against homicide was adopted by the state legislature, an independent basis be found separate and apart from the religious teaching. To so conclude is to fail to recognize that religious values are far more fundamental than actions by the legislature or by the courts.

And one last point. The author obviously believes that incest is wrong. But the prohibition on incest is based on religious teaching. Thus, the author finds herself upholding religious principles in her search to find a basis for justifying abortion.

I hasten again to add that the good will and wholesome instincts of the author permeate her article and I suggest that if she found herself in the legislature, she would vote at a minimum to outlaw all abortion except in cases of rape or incest. And she would not be entirely comfortable with making even those two exceptions.

JOHN P. HALE

In search of inclusive paradigms

Staten Island, N.Y.

To the Editors: Sidney Callahan did an excellent job of answering the pro-abortion advocates ["A Case for Pro-Life Feminism," April 25]. She made abortion almost entirely a women's issue. She describes the "real" world of men as, "hunting, war, and the corporate fast track." Yet she has it the overweening intention of feminist women to get into that "corporate fast track."

The desired goal of feminists would appear to be, "reproductive freedom, social equality, sexual fulfillment, and full personal development." But one wonders whether this is for all women, or for the few. Will all women realize these wonderful events? What about such Christian paradigms for human beings — men and women — as unselfishness, self-sacrifice, generosity, patience, fortitude, altruism, and charity? They are of the Christian ethos, which, until self-centered satisfactions had been held up as a criterion by the feminists, and most especially by the materialists of this last

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forty years, was considered the norm. . .

Women have natural disabilities for the market place — which Mrs. Callahan points out by denying them — associated with pregnancy which has caused them to be better suited to nurturing, family life, and taking care of the children and the home than to hunting or to providing food. Mrs. Callahan will not accept this, and seeks to turn it to instant advantage so that with the help of contraception and a new feminist society, which she will establish by bending men to a female-directed culture in which men do much more nurturing, women [can] become prime ministers, and presidents, and dictators, and conduct wars in place of the men, directing them, but probably not fighting them. One must ask whether, after they have proved they can barter as well as men, will that end the contest and the acrimony.

There is a natural order to things which has been going on in the world for millions of years, and although . . . it is evident society has changed, it is clear human nature has not.

The attempt to pit women against men, and to blame men for all the problems of the human race, is unnatural, short-sighted, ill-willed, ill-advised, and ahistorical. Talk of men being free and everywhere in control of themselves and their destiny, and women enslaved and disempowered is nonsense. . . .

Applause, applause

Richmond, Va.

To the Editors: I wish to applaud Sidney Callahan on her excellent essay. Callahan posits sound historical and theological reasoning for a pro-life perspective to this most controversal subject.

One does not necessarily have to be pro-abortion in order to be loyal to the cause of feminism. One does not need to relinquish one's "liberal credentials" in order to champion the rights of the unborn.

I hope *Commonweal* will feature other exponents of this position. I would also like to see a scholarly rebuttal to this (Callahan) article.

JOHN D. BODDIE

Women have gone into the market place for self-achievement and, of course, to make money. But they have found they have not liberated themselves . . . Now they have two jobs where before they had one. . . . Men, in fairness, should participate in the work of the household so there is a balance, but the determining factor should be fairness, concern, understanding, and a realization that it is the right thing to do since the burden of woman's new role in business and public affairs should not be borne entirely by women. It should be lightened by men, not as enemies as some feminists would have it, but as created beings participating in a shared human existence.

JOHN BRANIGAN

Hard questions that remain unanswered

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: Sidney Callahan achieves a great deal in her recent article — but not as much as she claims.

Her first achievement is her case *against* pro-choice feminism. She deftly exposes the weaknesses in a number of pro-choice feminist positions: the absolutizing of a right of bodily integrity; a conception of morality that is limited to explicit contracts and biased in favor of the active, the decisive, the autonomous, and the dominant; a theory that makes fetal rights totally contingent on the mother's decision to "confer" them.

Her second achievement is her case *for* pro-life feminism — taken in the general sense that a society which does not rely on abortion is much more likely to afford women real equality than one which does.

However, neither the case against exaggerated pro-choice arguments for abortion-on-demand nor the general case for an anti-abortion norm in society really supports her implied contention that abortion is never justified morally and her explicit contention that abortion should be outlawed legally.

Because one rejects extreme claims for bodily integrity, one need not necessarily conclude that there are at least some situations in which the claims of bodily integrity might justify abortion. (Rape and the threat to a woman's life, or even grave damage to her health, are the obvious examples that come to mind.)

Because one rejects the idea that fetal rights depend entirely on the mother's "conferral," one need not necessarily conclude that those rights which a fetus possesses simply as a member of the human species are in every respect equal to the rights of a born infant — and that, no more than the born infant's, could those rights ever be overriden.

Because one rejects the idea of a society that is generally accepting of abortion, one need not necessarily conclude that no abortions are ever justified or that legal prohibition is the best way to counter abortion.

I will take the dangerous step of drawing a parallel. One can very easily rebut exaggerated justifications, along individualist or just plain macho lines, for taking the law into one's own hands. One can very easily make the case that a society which is tolerant toward individuals' defending their rights by violent means will, in the end, not be a society protective of those rights at all. But such a case against vigilantism in general still doesn't resolve the problem of a specific case when the private resort to force might well be the lesser evil. In our society, both morals and law discourage such a resort to force (though perhaps not enough), but they don't rule it out absolutely.

All told, Sidney Callahan has rebutted pro-choice feminism and set forth a societal vision for pro-life feminism. But she has not made the connection between these large visions and the hard questions posed at the individual level by this or that particular life-shattering pregnancy. Nor does she connect her pro-life vision to the practical questions posed at the legal level by the problems of pluralism. I do not think she will be able to make those connections without engaging the kind of arguments made by Joan C. Callahan about the peculiarly borderline moral status of fetal life.

ANDREW R. MULRONEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Screen

TAKING LIBERTY

E.T. MEETS WARGAMES

SWEET LIBERTY abounds in irony, but lacks enough wit to please fully. The conception is brilliant: the making of a film about the American Revolution based on a book by a small town college history professor, played by Alan Alda. Alda, who directed and wrote *Sweet Liberty*, provides his character with some sharp comments on the nature of American moviemaking. For example, when the film company comes to the town to take in its authentic colonial feel, the professor discovers that's about the only authenticity they're after in their effort to turn his serious study of a colonial family into a lusty melodrama. So the professor starts introducing himself as "the author of the book from which the film has not been taken." The center of *Sweet Liberty* involves Alda's efforts to restore authenticity to the script, which at the end allows for interesting byplay between art and life.

The plot in itself provides an intensely ironic comment about the treatment of history in recent film. As the history professor, Alda mocks the film crew's indifference to the reality of the past, but as a director, he implies that history can now only be approached indirectly. The premise of the film within a film is that teen audiences (the bulk of all moviegoers) will only be lured to a historical film if the filmmakers follow the three "principles" of all teenpix: "defy authority, destroy property, and take people's clothes off." Although Alda the professor attempts to subvert such appeal to the lowest common denominator of taste, Alda the director assumes that the only way to get people to watch history is to finesse popular indifference to the past by framing it with the present tense. *Sweet Liberty* suggests that the only way to make a film about history is to make a film about *making* a film about history. Given the fates of other recent history films, Alda might very well be right.

Alda's oblique approach, moreover, leaves him room to underscore his belief in the relevance of the past to today's events. With some daring, Alda uses *Sweet Liberty* to satirize the pompous tyrannies of media moguls corrupting mass taste in the name of democracy. When, during the filming of the climactic battle sequences of the film within the film, Alda the professor stages a send-up of the three "principles" of teenpix, Alda the director makes his most successful parallel between the American Revolution and his guerrilla war against Hollywood's latest substandards.

But *Sweet Liberty* only fitfully maintains this witty archness. The interaction between art and life, past and present, is too minimal until the end. Alda also includes too much: too many love subplots, too much of his mother, and too much of himself. The first half-hour bores us with flat arguments between Alda and his girlfriend (Lisa Hiboldt), an American literature professor who won't let him move in unless they get married. Her lovely eyes and face make the scenes bearable, but they remain dramatically static. Does Hollywood really think people are particularly interested in unusual domestic arrangements anymore? Long discussions of who-lives-how-with-whom have become, like nerd humor, an automatic crutch for an invalid screenplay. And there is the added burden of watching Alda play the love scenes like MASH's Hawkeye — pretending to be so sexy that he's irresistible. One expects too much of them, perhaps, but stars like Alda or Woody Allen, with whom he shares ironic wit and self-consciousness, never let intelligence get in the way of vanity.

Aside from the love subplots, Alda includes a mother-son story that has no resonance. The mother is played by the ancient film grandee Lilian Gish, but she is given nothing to do but get sick and pine for a lost love. One imagines, for example, she could have told her son about respect for the past; instead she comes off as an old buffoon. With Alda racing back and forth from movie set to his mother's home to the hospital, the latter part of the film becomes thin gruel indeed until the redemptive conclusion.

The uncoordinated, often static feel of *Sweet Liberty* is represented most in one role, that of the starlet of the film within the film. Well played by Michelle Pfeiffer, she is a tart vixen who can dominate a set, overrule the director, and kick around her leading man (Michael Caine). She is supposed to be playing the demure widow of the colonial family about whom Alda the professor wrote his book. To him, ironically, she only acts in character, modestly batting her eyelashes and speaking with the reputed reserve of Southern gentlewomen of antique times. Her Hollywood name is Faith, which should provide some clue to how things work out between her and the professor. But in key climactic scenes, their relationship is rushed to an unclear, enigmatic conclusion, as if there were no way to dispose of the art-life paradoxes that have been raised, but to drop them flat. Like the rest of the film, her contradictory character seems in need of so much more drama and elaboration.

SHORT CIRCUIT disappoints even more. Its director, John Badham, was responsible for the witty *War Games* of 1983, and here he tries a variation on its theme of a machine with a mind of its own. But rather than focusing on a computer accidentally triggered by a teenage hacker to play at nuclear war, Badham selects a robot who wants to escape from the military uses planned for it by Nova Robotics, a hi-tech firm in Oregon.

The robot, the last of a prototype quintet, is named Number 5 by his unimaginative managers, even though he has an attractive personality and distinguished ancestors as old as Frankenstein and as recent as Hal in *2001*. The dramatic problem is that, for all his mechanical makeup, 5 resembles these dangerous, morally provocative avatars less than the benign Other, E.T. With a plot structure pitting good guys

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trying to save 5 against bad guys trying to kill him, Badham opens the door to predictably sentimental claptrap. In place of the critical self-examination Badham evoked in *War Games*, he uses *Short Circuit* for moral self-congratulation.

From the first, the score is stacked in 5's moral favor: Nova's security staff and top scientists are mindless and greedy warmongers given to Faustian statements that the robots are "impervious to human weaknesses." On cue, 5 gets hit by lightening, "malfunctions," and escapes to explore the world. Predictably, 5's inventor is a laid-back fellow (Steve Guttenberg) who never examines what he is doing working for a defense contractor.

Badham uses his characters to provide some awkward sexual humor. How much better he caught youth culture in one comment in *War Games*: "forty-two, that's old"!

Sooner or later, a girl has to show up, and she's the same as in *War Games*, Ally Sheedy. Sheedy has not improved with age. Natural as a teenager, she has developed a brittle cattiness as a young woman, a vociferous artificiality that makes many of her scenes painful to watch. Worse, she comes equipped with a houseful of pets and drives an ice cream truck, a sure sign she can do no wrong as a soulmate to 5 the fugitive. After all this telegraphing about plot and character, Badham's trick-ending comes as no surprise.

Badham does have enough skill at pacing and editing to keep the story of the robot's escape and the "birth" of its mind interesting. Depicting combat with the other four robots, Badham wittily evokes every fighting convention in film from *Robin Hood* to *The Three Stooges*. But that is key to his problem: *Short Circuit* is full of allusions, but little substance. Badham obviously wants to make "peace" movies that exploit Hollywood's fascination with hi-tech machinery, but he needs to avoid the easy caricatures and safe liberal-left thinking he wallows in here. TOM O'BRIEN

Stage

OUT OF THE WASTELAND

EXPERIENCE & ART

IN THE SECOND act of Richard Nelson's *Principia Scriptoriae*, a committee of eminent writers — an American, a German, a Latin American — has come to an unnamed Latin American country to negotiate with the minister of culture of the revolutionary government for the release of a celebrated poet. The poet has been imprisoned because he was the ambassador to Spain of the now deposed rightist dictatorship. When the host, a seasoned writers' conference in-fighter, accuses the delegation of not understanding about torture, a young American observer explodes. He opens his trousers to show the permanent damage to his genitals, suffered in this country fifteen years before, and insists that his coequal, the minister's secretary, take off his shirt to show that his broken shoulder had never healed properly. At this point, the visiting Latin American describes the torture that his wife underwent in his native country, and the German says, solemnly, that he read the essay describing the event and found it moving. The older American angrily tells his young countryman to pull up his pants because, "We're talking here." It is a startling and disturbing scene not because of the characters, who never wander far from stereotype, nor because torture is the ostensible subject, but because at this graphic moment Nelson's themes become most insistent. The play is concerned with the distance between experience and its transformation into either art or effective reporting, and the way in which the written account alters the actuality that is its source.

The two young men are the central figures in the play. We meet them in Act I, fifteen years earlier, in jail for passing out leaflets attacking the dictatorship. The American, who has written a first novel about how his bourgeois family does not understand him and how St. Louis is a wasteland, has arrived in the Latin American country, his baggage full of undigested clichés of the 1960s. The Latin American, fresh out of an English university, is almost as innocent about his own country as is the American whose ignorance he attacks. The early scenes are often funny, as we watch these two young men, creations of the literature they have read and of the great works they hope to write, alternately annoy and comfort one another. The American's need to preach platitudes is particularly effective perhaps because Nelson, who would have been in college in the late sixties, knows him more intimately than he does the Latin American. The scenes in the first act are each labeled — a lighted message across the top of the stage — with one of the standard rules from texts for beginning writers; these are intended as comic and, as the scenes get uglier, ironic comments on the imprisoned men. They are not really necessary to the action on stage because the conversation of the prisoners — ranging from their ambitions to their reading to their families — tells us all we need to know about the search for experience that can be made into art. The American at first believes that he is safe because he is an American, the Latin American because his father is a prominent lawyer. But as their discomfort turns to fear and then to pain, there is desperation in their attempt to find comfort in the fact that they are accumulating "usable material."

A moment at the end of Act II, confirmed by a coda that flashes back to 1970, suggests that whatever the two men have become — one an unwriting functionary, the other a successful journalist -- they share an experience that confirms the muddled idealism under their dangerous youthful foolishness. Yet, this impulse is little more than a gesture because the main effect of the second act is to insist that truth and virtue have only literary validity and that words are at the service of reputation and political expediency. Even if we accept the integrity of the visiting delegation and, from an opposing position, the minister of culture, the process is a frighteningly funny game like the most flamboyant public quarrels at the last International P.E.N. conference in New York.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Principia Scriptoriae, hardly a name for a marquee, was effectively produced for a limited run by the Manhattan Theater Club and, as with most of Nelson's plays, is likely to find its audience outside of New York. It is scheduled for fall production by the Royal Shakespeare Company in London.

A LESS AMBIGUOUS reception than the one given *Principia* came to another idea play of sorts, Brian Clark's *The Petition*, hailed not for its content but because it stars Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn in what *they* say will be their last two-character play. Much has been made of the performers as an acting couple, as though the play were designed to illustrate the Tandy-Cronyn marriage rather than that of the Milnes, the retired English general and his wife, who are Clark's characters. I cannot share the reviewers' sentimental enthusiasm for the two actors, although I have often admired their work on other occasions. Tandy is effective enough as Lady Elizabeth, but I was oddly unmoved by the performance or, perhaps, the character. I never for a moment believed Cronyn's rigid old general. Irascible he can be (*The Gin Game*), meticulous he can be (*Krapp's Last Tape*), but these elements, evident in General Milne, never become transformed into a character bound by rules, informed by love. At one point, Cronyn's foot made an odd little turn that caught my eye, a playful twist that forced me to concentrate on the actor, not because of the rightness of the gesture for General Milne, but because I expected the fey old rascal from *Cocoon* to come bursting out of the general's shell and dance across the stage. He didn't.

The titular petition is one favoring nuclear disarmament which Lady Elizabeth has signed much to the distress of her husband who not only opposes its substance but sees her name on the list as a repudiation of his career and the England that he has served. The appearance of the petition in the *Times* is an occasion for a long delayed discussion about their marriage. From the beginning, she has felt a prisoner not of the general, whom she loves, but of the system which he represents. Her one major act of nonconformity — before the petition — was a long-ago affair which the general, bending his rigidities, put up with because he wanted her more than he did the correct thing. The political differences of these two people and the social, sex-role implications of their marriage are somehow lost in her impending death — the terrible secret that reviewers (*New York Times, Time*) have refused to reveal as though the play were a mystery story instead of the kind of semi-serious work that one would expect from the author of *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* In the acting and in the writing, *The Petition* seems designed to pull at our heartstrings. I prefer *Principia Scriptoriae*, which, whatever its weaknesses, was aimed at the mind.

GERALD WEALES

Books: THE RESTORATION OF VISION

NORTHPOINT Press books are always good to look at. These four are handsome, and all the same size so they sit companionably and harmoniously in the bookshelf. Or each can be balanced neatly in the palm. Which is as it should be for the work of Wendell Berry.

Two of these books are selections, the visible part of a career's output which also includes three novels, *Nathan Coulter*, *The Memory of Old Jack*, and *A Place on Earth*. Naturally, there are omissions which any given reader might regret. I miss, for example, an essay, "A Secular Pilgrimage," from the 1975 collection *A Continuous Harmony: Essays Cultural and Agricultural* on the upsurge of nature poetry. But this is a rich gathering.

Berry is well-known in environmental circles as an untiring and eloquent advocate of "sustainable" farming methods. But he is not as well-known as he should be to the rest of us for what he is: one of our most versatile and prolific writers. Why isn't he better known? Perhaps in a country that admires excess and consumption, rapidly changing excitement, and the quick fix, Berry's virtues of discipline, balance, and responsible restraint might seem old-fashioned and "irrelevant." As might his use of certain uncurrent words. In his essays on poetry in *Standing by Words*, as in his essays on the land in *Recollected Essays*, Berry has loaded words such as "sin," "pride," "ignorance," "love," "obedience" with a new/old meaning, and uses these words naturally and unself-consciously.

He takes words as seriously as he takes farming, and for him poets are the bearers of our culture. The true poet has "larger responsibilities." He works from and embodies a concept of order (by which he means "the possibility of responsible action"), and an "ecological intelligence" of temperance and obligation superior to himself. In closely argued, original, and passionate essays in *Standing by Words*, Berry castigates the egotism of the Romantics, particularly Wordsworth and Shelley, while asserting that our richest and most responsible tradition is to be found in such writers as Milton, Dante, Pope. He has little time for the modern "specialization of poetry," and the "religion of art."

THE WILD BIRDS
SIX STORIES OF THE PORT WILLIAMS MEMBERSHP
Wendell Berry
Northpoint, $13.95, 146 pp.

COLLECTED POEMS 1957-1982
Wendell Berry
Northpoint, $16.50, 268 pp.

STANDING BY WORDS
ESSAYS
Wendell Berry
Northpoint, $20, 213 pp.

RECOLLECTED ESSAYS 1965-1980
Wendell Berry
Northpoint, $18, 340 pp.

Brian Swann

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is no accident that Berry admires Milton and Dante, since he too is possessed of an eschatological imagination. The great truths of Christianity are reworked into an environmental ethic in the largest sense, an ordering of the world that can best be described as hierarchic, a "just hierarchy," not the inflexible or totalitarian kind: a kind of updated Great Chain of Being. There is no need to make up such laws, Berry says. We just need to rediscover them. Because there is an absolute truth: the truth of the nature of our existence on earth. An ecological truth. Berry's aim in everything he writes, from story to essay to poem, is to "restore the broken connections" through love, right work, and community.

To some, his method of restoration by means of a return to the land might seem utopian (and sometimes his tone might seem too austere, too relentless, too much of a jeremiad). And it is clear that some of his roots are deep in a specific Southernness, in, for example, the anti-industrial critique of the Agrarians (the title of *Standing by Words* recalls *I'll Take My Stand*). To others, Berry might seem something of an anachronism when, in an era of massive agribusiness, he advocates using horses instead of tractors. Certainly, there is something Jeffersonian about him. In one essay, he points out with approval the two Jeffersonian principles "indispensable to democracy": education, and the crucial importance to the state of the small landowner — of which Berry is one himself, working his Kentucky farm, healing the land depleted by centuries of neglect and abuse. However we react to Berry, his informed and intelligent analysis of our affluent society is worth heeding. If, in our largely urban society, we cannot easily see how we can return to the land, we can take away with us Berry's emphasis on "restoring the wholeness of work" ("work is the health of love" — Berry's many aphorisms stay in the mind). Something can be done about our destructive history, even if it is only understanding it.

Berry's themes do not vary from book to book, or from genre to genre. There is an interweaving and a kind of spiritual manuring. Nothing is wasted. Everything gets recycled and renewed. If there is one main theme Berry starts from it is that "we have been for some time in a state of general cultural disorder and that this disorder has now become critical." This disintegration is seen in all aspects of society, from language (the theme of *Standing by Words*) to the basic biological or cultural unit, marriage or domestic order (two of Berry's most impressive essays are "Poetry and Marriage" in *Standing by Words*, and "The Body and the Earth," with its moving interpretation of the *Odyssey*, in *Recollected Essays*).

Whether he is writing about canoeing on the Kentucky River or hiking the Red River Gorge; buying or repairing a home; writing stories about Wheeler Catlett; telling stories of his childhood; writing about "Discipline and Honor"; writing about form in poetry and culture; making poems distinguished for their scope and detail — or on any other subjects, in whatever form, Wendell Berry is extraordinary. In one of his essays he says that "to live in the place that is one's subject is to pass through the surface." Berry passes through the surface of everything he cares about. Which is just about everything. And he is accessible. The style of his writing is always elegant and balanced, always passionate. It doesn't call attention to itself, and the subject shines through. Always we sense "an eagerness that is felt only by those who are doing what they want passionately to do," the eagerness of a man whose aim is "a decent, open, generous relation between a man's life and the world." His poem "The Silence" asks the question: "What must a man do to be at home in the world?" Everything Berry has written attempts to answer that question.

At one point, Berry notes that he has been accused of tilting at windmills. "It is a hard world, hostile to the values that you stand for." His response is to note that, first, regeneration can begin now, at home, by our becoming answerable to at least some of our own needs, by learning what those needs are, and "by refusing the glamorous and the frivolous." And then he decides it is perfectly all right to tilt at windmills "that draw the lifeblood out of our veins," for they represent acts of a uselessly applied destructive science, and its machines. Berry takes his stand for an old humanism; for the resuscitation of an ancient knowledge. He holds out hope. For even though we are still "a long way from any large-scale regeneration . . . we are apparently near the end of a degenerative phase of an evolutionary process."

Guises of the confounding Spirit

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY, ORIGINS TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Edited by Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorff, with Jean Leclercq
Crossroad, $49.50, 502 pp.

Margaret R. Miles

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY, Origins to the Twelfth Century, Volume 16 of *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest*, is a very valuable collection of essays that reflect upon "the historical manifestations of . . . Christian spirituality as a discipline." The editors' "hope that a clearer and more adequate understanding of what the various Christian communions have seen as the inner meaning of Christianity — and therefore 'spirituality' in the root sense — will emerge from a broad intra-Christian ecumenical enterprise of this nature" is well-founded.

Since "spirituality" is itself a term whose definition is not a matter of common scholarly agreement, the editors offer a working definition:

> Christian spirituality is the lived experience of Christian belief in both its general and more specialized forms. . . . It is possible to distinguish spirituality from doctrine in that it concentrates not on faith itself, but on the reaction that faith arouses in religious consciousness and practice. It can

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Regina de Cormier-Shekerjian

Realities
homage to Chagall

There are days
the color of gun metal and ashes
when you sit at the table
with your face in your hand.
All light is incoherent
according to science, you say
and your hand agrees. In this reluctant spring,
your hand
silenced by the facts, the dark rattle
of the world, you believe reality
is the weighted failure of words
to change anything. To rid yourself of grief,
you say, no longer seems possible.

The truth of this does not disappear
when, one morning, for no reason
the coachman brings his green eye.
He comes with his mirrors and his alphabets
and his mouth-harp made from the breastbone
of a frog. From under his cloak
he summons the red violins, the clocks of the rivers,
a flight of milkmaids and beggars and lovers
untroubled by gravity, and he signs
the sound of light,
and the fist of your life opens,

and your hand moves back to its work.

Elisabeth Murawski

Reaching Darien

In Rome the cradle city forced to die,
lover, friends a world away asleep,
your need for magic fevers while you keep
watch, flicker of the tongue a speech, a lie
to calm the green Severn, his painter's eye
possessing you for history. The deep
lungs' wrench he's never seen, the final heap
of fossil yet unpressed, the crooked sigh.
You promise with a surgeon's face a ghost
sprung lightly from the sheets, a painless clock
that stops, quick as a thought, hands down.
But seven hours to drown! The taloned coast
grapples while the black surf dives, the fast rock
flashes as the last breath flies into stone.

Larry Weirather

Van Gogh Tumulus
Newgrange, Ireland

On this asylum
the carved nebulas
of "The Starry Night"
swirl in stone.

A raving whorl
of crows roosts
in nearby fields
carved and curved
into rye smiles.

The nebulas lie open —
labyrinths, the ears
of gods coiled
like fossil nautili
listening in a sea
of stone.

Was it bad vision
or loss of madness
when we cut off
our first ear
and called it maize,
pounding it
to stone?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

likewise be distinguished from Christian ethics in that it treats not all human actions in their relation to God, but those acts in which the relation to God is immediate and implicit.

Articles discuss the many facets of monastic and lay spirituality from the scriptural base to the dogmatic framework, and the liturgical and practical expressions of Christian spirituality. Careful not to neglect a broad geographical spectrum, Syriac-speaking Christians as well as Eastern Orthodox and Latin Christians are given extensive treatment. Visually-oriented and verbally-centered understandings of Christian spirituality are also included. Part I, "Periods and Movements," includes chronological surveys, while the essays in Part II discuss "Themes and Values." Although the purpose of the volume is not to give startlingly new interpretations of the ideas and practices discussed, these nineteen essays are packed with accessible information and insightful description.

Authors of the various essays were chosen with obvious care and represent, in most cases, acknowledged authorities in their fields. Beginning with the editors themselves — scholars who are equal to their potentially overwhelming task of selecting the authors who could provide the range and depth the title projects — the authors discuss their subjects both knowledgeably and interestingly: Robert M. Grant, Jean Gribomont, Roberta Bondi, Benedicta Ward, J. Patout Burns, Mary T. Clark, Leonid Ouspensky, and Kallistos Ware are a few of these names.

Conspicuously and happily missing from this volume is a dominant interest in a necessarily elite-learned spirituality. The practices by which spirituality was realized and implemented in both East and West are treated in articles on liturgy, monasticism, icons, pilgrimage, saints, and the miraculous practice of perpetual virginity. The communal is given attention as well as the private and personal practice of the spiritual life. The volume avoids temptations to an implicit anti-material bias by the treatment of these themes, as well as by frequent reminders of the historical context, social origins, and geographical settings of the ideas and practices discussed.

Most of the problems of the volume are inevitable in a collection of essays that attempts to cover an approximately 1100-year time frame and a broad geographical area. In some of the essays there is a tension between giving information — such as the works of the historic authors discussed — and presenting the spirituality of these authors with clarity and depth. Cultural and ecclesiastical assumptions sometimes govern definitions and interpretations; in one essay, "heretics" are defined as those "whose faith was no longer compatible with that of the great church," as if the very constitution of the ideas and constituencies of the "great church" were not itself a matter of continuing conflict and redefinition in the early centuries. The word "great" is used in several essays, and is freighted with affirmation and value — the "great fathers," the "great church." These expressions on occasion give the impression that the author believes that it is legitimate to speak of one monolithic spirituality in "the early church." Diversity is difficult to maintain and articulate in the broad sweep of some of the essays.

> *One finds in each form of spiritual guidance in the major religious traditions a distinct or dominant tonality. Thus, the classic Hasidic spiritual guide was characterized by overflowing joy and his close bond with his community. The Zen master is characterized by his austere and insistent iconoclasm of thoughts. Though the notion of spiritual fatherhood/motherhood may be found incidentally in other traditions, that notion is not the dominant image of the guide as it was for the early Christian monks and nuns. Thus fatherhood/motherhood – "begetting in the spirit" – is the distinctive character of Christian spiritual direction, particularly in the monastic context, compared with other traditions of spiritual direction.*
>
> Sister Donald Corcoran
> in *Christian Spirituality*

A more serious objection in what is otherwise an excellent and valuable volume is one that will need to be consciously corrected by readers if the volume is not to seriously distort one's vision of historical Christian spirituality. That objection is the neglect of the roles and participation of women in Christian churches. This neglect is not absolute: several essays mention that women were engaged in the ideas and practices discussed; some essays acknowledge that women existed in the history of Christianity by the use of inclusive language; monastic women, ammas in desert asceticism, and women who were the recipients of letters and treatises of a Jerome or an Anselm are mentioned. Roberta Bondi emphasizes the use of feminine imagery for God and the centrality of Mary in Syriac spirituality, but Gy minimizes the extent of Bernard's devotion to Mary. In short, the volume overwhelmingly reinforces the impression that it is the spirituality of "great men," of priests and of bishops who were

Free access

. . . to information from the Federal government is available to you at more than 1,380 Depository Libraries across the country. You can visit any of these libraries and use the Depository collection free of charge. To find the Federal Depository in your area, contact your local library or write to the Federal Depository Library Program, Office of the Public Printer, Washington, DC 20401.

Federal Depository Library Program

This program is supported by The Advertising Council and is a public service of this publication

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"types of God" that is important and interesting in the history of Christian spirituality. The index lists three women in a list of 175 names although a few more women than that are mentioned in essays.

It would not have been too much to expect a whole essay on women's spirituality in some part of the time period under discussion. Such an essay need not have implied the isolation of women to thirty pages of a 500-page book, but might have raised and analyzed from a historical perspective the question as to whether there is a distinctive women's spirituality. Perpetua, Egeria, Hrothswitha, the Ancrene Riwle, or the abbesses and queens discussed by Bede might have entered such a discussion. Even an editorial lament that the pres-

ence of women is so difficult to detect in a tradition that has willfully and/or thoughtlessly marginalized women would have at least acknowledged the presence of approximately half of those engaged in Christian spirituality in every historical time and place. Because the book was otherwise so thorough and helpful, I felt this omission more painful than if the volume had remained within narrow intellectual and geographical limits.

In summary, scholars and teachers of the Christian tradition, as well as interested readers, will find this volume a useful source of information and insight on the diverse strands by which Christian spirituality has been intellectually explored and concretely lived; some of us will grieve that it does little to correct the impression that Christian spirituality was exclusively a male phenomenon.

In Brief

THE COURAGE OF CONVICTION, *edited by Phillip L. Berman Dodd, Mead, $17.95, 218 pp.*

A collection of thirty-two essays by "prominent contemporaries" which is both irksome and ingratiating. The irksome part is that the editor has shirked his responsibility to cut out the banal and belabored in the essays, and, worse, has stuffed his introduction with both.

Even so, several essays are brilliant and a few are deeply moving reflections on personal beliefs. Steve Allen combines his irresistible humor with a sense of responsibility: "Man was not put on this earth primarily to buy philosophical merchandise before examining it, just as he was not put here to turn out hit record albums, or to be utterly irresistible to the opposite sex, to use cocaine, or to wear the tightest possible jeans.

"From lecture platforms and in personal contact, and even in speaking on television, I have taken every opportunity to defend rationality and to discourage the idea that it can be achieved with a minimum of effort."

Reason is not all. Thus Rabbi Harold Kushner: "In recent years, I have come increasingly to appreciate the role of the irrational in religion . . . I have come to understand that living and thinking rationally nourishes only the top two or three inches of my being, and leaves the rest of my soul starved."

While we are never told how the contributors were selected — eight doctors and scientists, five show business personalities, four political leaders, seven writers, five religious professionals, two teachers, and one artist in a pear tree — there is a glaring absence of black clergy and adherents of institutional religions in general.

Variety in literary style and in substance carries the book. Other highlights include stories by Jules Olitski and the questions about "the chance gyrations of bits of primeval dust" by Jane Goodall.

K.S.S.

REVIEWERS

BRIAN SWANN, *a professor of English at Cooper Union in New York City, recently edited* Smoothing the Ground: Essays on Native American Oral Literature *(Univ. of California). His latest book of poetry is* The Middle of the Journey *(Univ. of Alabama).*

MARGARET R. MILES *is a professor of historical theology at Harvard Divinity School and the associate editor of the* Harvard Theological Review. *Her most recent book is* Image as Insight *(Beacon).*

Correspondence

(Continued from page 322)

with it, even in an off-campus setting. Most recently a group of students has formed with the express purpose of looking for heresy in the classroom, reflecting, I am afraid, the climate abroad in the church. I submit that while these experiences may not negate our first amendment rights, they do nothing to foster a healthy intellectual life in Catholic higher education.

JANET KALVEN

Living with brackets

Alexandria, Va.

To the Editors: I was surprised and disappointed by your editorial, "Right to Free Speech" [March 14]. A wise Catholic theologian once advised that if there were certain Catholic teachings which were at odds with one's conscience, then one need not leave the church; rather, one could put that issue or those issues in brackets — hold it in abeyance — until it is resolved. Abortion, it seems to me, is one of those issues for many Catholics. If I am not mistaken, rank-and-file Catholics are fairly evenly divided on this issue. And who is the church? It is more than just the hierarchy. It is the community of believers.

In your editorial you try to make some

Readers who wish to enable Father Frechette to buy bricks to build his projected orphanage for abandoned children in Honduras (May 9 issue) should send contributions to: ORPHANS, P.O. Box 400, Naugatuck, Ct. 06770.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

distinctions which only "fuzzify" the controversy, and you fail to make some crucial [ones]. For example, I fail to comprehend the distinction you try to make between free speech and responsible dissent (you can have the latter without the former). Wasn't Catholic theologian Charles E. Curran engaged in responsible dissent when he was rebuked by the Vatican? Your distinction between the denial of academic freedom and the cancellation of lectures might also be a distinction without a difference.

Furthermore, surely there is a fundamental difference between the Roman Catholic church on the one hand, and organizations like General Motors, the U.S Army, and the *New York Times*, et. al., on the other. Likewise, there is a crucial difference between the abortion issue on the one hand, and the divinity of Christ, the centrality of the Scriptures and sacraments, and racism and genocide on the other. In fact, haven't Catholic theologians always disagreed about when human life begins and when the soul enters the body?

There also is a significant difference between the church's "right to proclaim" and the church's right to coerce and punish. In addition, I am not aware of any dissenting Catholics who argue that "anything goes" in their battle against authoritarianism. Who are these people?

Finally, I wholeheartedly agree with you that "the case for theological and political pluralism cannot become a mere appendage to the American abortion debate," but who is responsible for making it that? In my judgment, there are some far more serious issues confronting the church today than abortion.

ANTHONY J. DiSTEFANO

A rare find

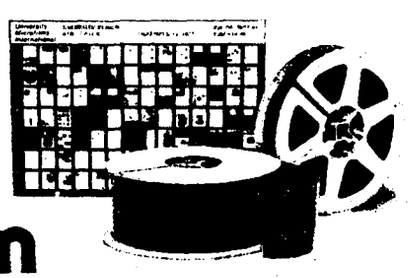
Aurora, Ill.

To the Editors: Recently I was asked to recommend a "Catholic" columnist who would consistently exhibit a depth, insight, and range of subject matter that would appeal to "an educated reader" anxious to confront material of substance and reflection.

Fortunately, I had occasion to read John Garvey's column of February 28 ["Prayer, Politics, & Doubt"] shortly after receiving that request. It provided me with the opportunity to recognize how I have turned to John Garvey's column with increasing anticipation over the years, deriving from it a stimulation and insight all too rare in other commentators in the Catholic press. So in providing my questioner with the name of John Garvey and *Commonweal*, I am led to extend a sincere note of appreciation for a column singular for its quality, scope, and enrichment.

JOEL RIPPINGER, O.S.B.

commonweal is available in microform



Please send me additional information.

Name _____
Institution _____
Street _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

University Microfilms International

300 North Zeeb Road
Dept. P.R.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
U.S.A.

18 Bedford Row
Dept. P.R.
London, WC1R 4EJ
England

Classified

Employment Possibility

COMMONWEAL seeking a receptionist-clerk, H.S. Grad, some experience, div. duties, type 45 wpm, 4-day week, start 175. (212) 683-2042.

Biblical Institute

21st Biblical Institute, Trinity College, Burlington, VT 05401, June 15-20, 1986. Faculty: Donald Senior, Carolyn Osiek, Roland Murphy, Bruce Metzger, Reginald Fuller, Joseph Cunneen. Write: Sister Miriam Ward. Wait list only.

Computer Newsletter

Computer Newsletter for Ministry. Free sample. Church Bytes, Inc. 201 W. Laflin Waukesha, WI 53186.

Fellowship

Fellowship of St. Gregory and St. Augustine. An international communion of prayer, work and study dedicated to the organic union in diversity of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. Write Fr. Robert, Incarnation Priory, 2210 Cedar St., Berkeley, CA 94709.

Religious Watch

Religious Watch — a newsletter monitoring over 500 U.S. and foreign periodicals for trends and ideas in religion. Money back guarantee if dissatisfied with first issue. Send $12 (for 11 issues) to: Religion Watch, P.O. Box 652, North Bellmore, N.Y. 11710.

Cassettes

Biblical Meditation Songs. Modern/Original. Personal/Convalescent use. Hour cassette: $6.50. Crosstones, Box 884002, Walled Lake, MI 48088.

Religious Community

Community living emphasizing individual spiritual growth and Christian ministry rooted in critical social analysis. Contact Gary Martinez, Box 105, Hico, WV 25854.

Books

Holy Land Travel, Social issues, Creative Judaica, International Children's books. Free catalogues: ADAMA BOOKS, 306 W. 38th St., NYC 10018.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

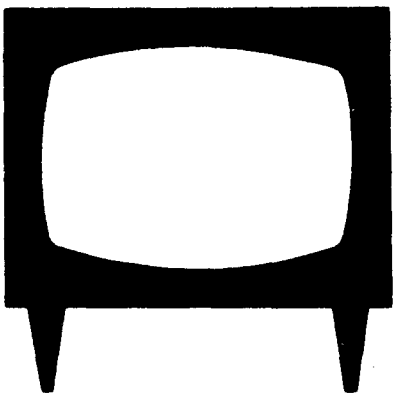
TWO CONFESSIONS

THINK OF THE distances separating Augustine's *Confessions* from Rousseau's. There is more than the distinctiveness of two intelligences, one humbled and anxious before God, the other wreaking vengeance on his persecutors. . . .

What strikes one most about Augustine is his guilelessness. *The Confessions* has the clarity of truth because it never occurs to Augustine that his past is not already known to God. Rousseau may not be the first, but he is certainly the best, example of the transformation in our idea of what it means to tell the truth. If Augustine speaks to relinquish himself of the past, Rousseau writes to claim the past as his own. In his *Confessions*, he recognizes that one can justify any behavior or validate any emotion if it comes under the cloak of disclosure. *This is how I felt; this is how it was* become statements that stamp one's life indelibly onto history.

Rousseau wins against his persecutors not because what he says is true, but because his version is the one that prevails. With history as arbiter and judge, in Rousseau we see the conviction that truth can be manufactured through the art of retelling so that the personal version becomes the final chapter. If one looks to the past for the model of modern autobiographies, or even for models of the writing of history, one looks to Rousseau.

Augustine is never his own subject; he writes of himself only insofar as his life exemplifies and articulates the human spirit striving for grace. In Rousseau's *Confessions,* personality becomes triumphant. Through the act of al-



legedly laying bare his conscience and by a selective, calculated memory, Rousseau creates himself for posterity. Truth as Augustine understood it is neither possible nor relevant. In the worlds between their *Confessions*, we see the awesome significance of a civilization in which myths of human progress, rather than religious myths, reign supreme. . . .

— Robert Jones in *Commonweal*
May 17, 1985

Six months for $9 Trial Offer

FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

Please send the next six months (11 issues) of COMMONWEAL to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

☐ **I prefer a full year's subscription at $28.**

6/6/86

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARIL Executive Director
Harold B. Whiteman, Jr.

RELIGION AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE

Editorial Board
Nancy M. Malone, O.S.U.
Editor
David A. Ames
Robert L. Johnson
Carol Ochs
Tony Stoneburner
Book Review Editor
Max Ticktin
Catherine Giles
Managing Editor

Advisory Board
Fontaine M. Belford
Robert Bellah
Kenneth E. Boulding
Cleanth Brooks
Robert McAfee Brown
David Burrell, C.S.C.
James T. Burtchaell, C.S.C.
Robert Coles, M.D.
Harvey Cox
Joe Cunneen
Donald Cutler
Joseph Duffey
Louis Dupre
James Forbes
Marvin Fox
Alice Gallin, O.S.U.
Arthur Green
Stanley Hauerwas
John Hines
Joseph Holland
David Allan Hubbard
William A. Johnson
Denise Levertov
D. Bruce Merrifield
Marianne H. Micks
Henry Millon
Walter J. Ong, S.J.
Parker Palmer
Joseph A. Pelham
Edmund D. Pellegrino, M.D.
Reynolds Price
Robert Rankin
Rosemary Radford Ruether
John W. Ryan
Nathan A. Scott, Jr.
Donald Shriver
Ronald J. Sider
David Wolf Silverman
Huston Smith
John Ferris Smith
Brother David Steindl-Rast
Peter Steinfels
Leonard Swidler
M. Elizabeth Tidball
Mary Luke Tobin, S.L.
Anton Ugolnik
Paul van Buren
Arthur Waskow
John Walker
Joseph Weizenbaum
Preston N. Williams

It's time we got it together!

If you are interested in the integration of your religious commitment and all of the disciplines,

read RELIGION & INTELLECTUAL LIFE*

Religion & the Visual Arts (Fall 1983) John W. Cook, Giles Gunn, John Dillenberger, John W. Dixon, Jr.
Religion & the University: The Crisis of Unbelief (Winter 1984) Robert N. Bellah.
Science & Religion (Summer 1985) Arthur Peacocke with responses by Frederic Burnham, Philip Hefner, Ernan McMullin, Robert John Russell, Robert Scharlemann, Brent Waters.
The Moral & Spiritual Imperatives of the Intellectual Life (Fall 1985) Robert Coles.
Feminism & Religious Experience (Winter 1986) Rosemary Radford Ruether, Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, Kathy Green, Carter Heyward.
In Defense of Metaphysics (Spring 1986) Huston Smith with responses by Denise Carmody, Larry Cobb, Eugene Fontinell, Arthur McGovern, S.J., Peter Ochs, Cornel West.

More this year:
The Jewish-Christian Reality by Paul van Buren. Evaluated by Rabbi Shamai Kanter and David Burrell, C.S.C. (Summer 1986). **Pathologies of Economics and the Economy** by Kenneth Boulding, Rosemary Haughton, and Rabbi Seymour Siegel (Fall 1986).

Coming next year:
Vocation, Profession, Career: Trends in Medicine, Law, Education, and the Ministry--**Pluralism--Jews and Christians on a Common Text:** Moses at the Burning Bush. In addition to thematic material, each issue contains pertinent book reviews and the **ARIL Forum**, featuring essays by writers such as Daniel Berrigan, S.J., Harvey Cox, Leonard Swidler, Ann Ulanov, Arthur Waskow, Gibson Winter, and poetry by Denise Levertov and others.

It's time we got together!

If you are a Protestant, Catholic, or Jew who is interested in an interfaith endeavor which seeks for commonality in the depths of our respective traditions, become a member of the ***Associates for Religion & Intellectual Life (ARIL).***

Join us at Cornell University, **June 22-25, 1986**
Third Annual ARIL Consultation: Prayer and Human Identity
with Ann & Barry Ulanov, Rabbi Arnold Wolfe

ARIL's basic assumption is that full human life--both personal and social--requires the real integration of spiritual and intellectual commitments. Many of us, Jews and Christians, experience some conflict between our spiritual convictions and the prevailing ideologies which shape our intellectual work. We also perceive that the ruling ideologies of our day are woefully inadequate in spiritual depth and moral discernment to the frightening dilemmas we face as a society.

For the sake, then, both of our spiritual and intellectual integrity and of our ability to contribute to the common good, many of us feel called to work towards a more fruitful integration of our spiritual/intellectual life.

RELIGION & INTELLECTUAL LIFE is the quarterly journal of the *Associates for Religion & Intellectual Life

Annual subscription & membership: $25.00; foreign members, please add $5.00.
(US currency only)
Write to: ***Associates for Religion & Intellectual Life***
College of New Rochelle New Rochelle, New York 10805-2308
Telephone: (914) 632-8852

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED